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MY YOUTHFUL DAYS.

BY ELIZA CHESEBRO.

My dear youthful days, they are passing away,
Like roses, too fair, or a bright summer day;
And the soft, golden light of my hope's sweetest dream,
Is vanishing now, like the sunset's faint gleam.

The fresh, early morn of that once happy day,
When joyous, I strained my heart's cords to my lay,
With sweet warbling chirps of the yore other sky,
That borrowed accord, or so little it fled by;

When lawn-and-grass hedges, I roamed with delight,
From morn's ray down till the fading of light;
And there chased the birds and the butterflies gay,
'Mong wild flowers and shrubs where they gamboll and play.

When love's wildest dream, I had painted so fair,
I deemed, ne'er Time's wing, nor dull sorrow nor care,
Its colors' deep hue, could ever from my sight,
Nor earth's fairest touch its fond image could blight.

That once happy day, ay, alas! it has fled,
Its pictures, so bright, they are mourned with the dead;
And evening's cool zephyr repeats the sweet lay,
My dear youthful days, they are passing away.

New York, April, 1856.

THE GUN MAKER OF MOSCOW; OR, VALDIMIR THE MONK.

A TALE OF THE EMPIRE UNDER PETER THE GREAT.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

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CHAPTER I.

THE GUN-MAKER AND THE MONK.

The time at which we open our story is mid-winter, and towards the close of the nineteenth century. Russia had passed through the long and bitter ordeal of national Night. The Tartar yoke had been worn till the very bones of the nation were galled; and when this was thrown off civil dissensions and insurrections commenced. The Poles and Swedes plundered the country, and amid general tumult and confusion some of them even were clamoring for the throne. At length a few patriotic citizens, pledging everything they held dear on earth to the cause of freedom from the chains of anarchy, and headed by a noble prince and an humble, patriotic butcher, made a bold stand to save the country. Moscow was retaken, and MICHAEL ROMANOFF was chosen Czar;—and this illustrious family still occupies the imperial throne. A century day of Russian greatness dawned; but the sun was not fairly upthe broad light opened not upon the empire—until Peter came to the throne.

In the department of the Slobods—the suburbs of Moscow—and very near the river Moskwa, stood an humble cot, the exterior of which betrayed a nearness of arrangement and show of taste but little more than made up for its smallness of size. Nor was it so very small in fact, but only in contrast; for near at hand about it stood many large, lofty, gothic-looking structures that overlooked the prim cot, as black mountains may look down upon a verdant hill. Within this cot, at noon, we meet as without. The two apartments in front, one of which one only used in winter, were furnished not only with neatness, but with a fair show of ornament and luxury. Back of these were a large and airy kitchen, and two small bedrooms; and back still from those was an artisan's shop, and other out-buildings. This shop was devoted to the manufacture of fire-arms mostly. Some swords, and other caped weapons, were made here upon special application.

The person now stood by his forge watching the white smoke as it curled up towards the throat of the chimney. He was a young man, not over three-and-twenty, and possessed a frame of more than ordinary symmetry and muscular development. He was not large—not above a medium size—but a single glance at the swelling chest, the broad shoulders, and the tawny ridges of iron bare arms, told at once that he was master of great physical power. His features were regular, yet strongly marked, and strongly handsome. His brow, which was full and high, was half covered by the light brown curls that waved over it; while his eyes, which were of a bright, brilliant, deep grey in color, took a cast of genius to the finished of the brow. His name was Rurik Nevel. His father had been killed in the then late war with the Turks, and the son, leaving his mother with a sufficiency of sustenance, went to Spain soon after the bereavement. There he found work in the most noted armories; and now, well versed in the trade, he had returned to his native city to follow his calling, and support his mother.

RURIC NEVEL, THE GUN-MAKER, DEFENDING HIMSELF AGAINST THE ATTACK OF COUNT DAMONOFF AND STEPHEN UREIN.

None by stood a boy—Paul Peoff—a bright, intelligent lad, some fifteen years of age, who had found himself in the gun-maker for the purpose of learning the art. His hair, and his eyes were darker than his master's, and if he possessed not so much sound intellect, he did surely possess an unwonted degree of keen, quick wit, and a principle of unswerving integrity.

The sun had been some time below the horizon, and the only light of any consequence that made things partially visible within the shop came from the dull blaze of the coals on the forge, as Paul over and anon bore down upon the brake that moved the bellows. Suddenly Rurik started back from the forge as his mind broke from the deep reverie into which he had fallen, and having bade his boy to on that matters were all properly disposed for the night, he turned towards the door, and was soon in the kitchen, where his mother had supper all prepared and set out.

Claudia Nevel was a noble looking woman, if the impress of a noble generous soul can be called such, and the light of her still handsome countenance was never brighter than when gazing upon her boy. She had seen the snows of fifty winters, and if they had left some ill-use upon her head, and some age-marks upon her face, the sunshine of full as many summers had left her with a cheerful, loving heart, and a prayerful, hopeful soul.

"It is moving again, faster than ever," remarked Paul, as he took his seat at the table.

"Ah," returned Rurik, resting his knife a few moments while he bent his ear to listen to the voice of the storm. "I had hoped 'twould snow no more for the present. The snow is deep enough now. And how I shiver!"

"Never mind," spoke the dame, in a tranquil, easy tone, "it must storm when it listeth, and we can only thank God that we have shelter, and pray for those who have none."

"Amen!" responded Rurik, fervently.

After this the trio remained some minutes silent, seeming to be busy in listening to the stormspirits that came pealing about the cot. The wind was high, and the snow was seen dashing upon the windows with a dreary, melancholy sound. The meal was at length eaten, and the table set back, and shortly afterwards Paul retired to his bed. It was his wont to retire early, for he was early to build the fires and prepare for the labors of the day.

Rurik drew his chair close up to the fireplace, and leaning against the jam he bowed his head and pondered again. This had become a habit with him of late. Sometimes he would sit thus during a whole hour without speaking, or even moving, and his mother did not interrupt him, as she supposed he might be solving some mechanical problem that had arisen to bother him. But these fits of thought had become too frequent, too lengthy, and too moody, for such a hypothesis, and the good woman was forced to believe that they were caused by something more remote than the business of the forge or the lathe. The youth now sat with his brow resting upon his hand, and his eyes bent upon the hearth. For half an hour he had not moved, and his face were an anxious, troubled look.

"Rurik, my son," spoke the mother at length, in a low, kind tone, "what is it that occupies your thoughts so much?

The young man started and turned his gaze upon his mother.

"Did you speak to me, my mother?" he asked, after having recalled his mind to things about him.

"Yes, my boy," she said. "I did speak to you. I asked you what it was that occupied your thoughts."

"O,—nothing—nothing," Rurik answered, after some moments of hesitation. "I was only thinking—that was all."

"I know you were thinking—and I know that was all at the time; but of what, Rurik? Come—hide no secrets from your mother. I have noticed you of late, and I know you are changed. That old smile is gone from your face, and sometimes I have feared the gladness was gone from your heart. I have seen you bent in thought over your work when I knew that of your work you were not thinking; and I have seen you buried in deep pondering when you should be reading or conversing with me."

"Have I then offended you, my mother?"

"No, no,—O, no, my noble boy. Never did such a thought enter my mind. If I have been made uneasy thereby it was only in love for you, and the fear that you were not as happy as in the past. Will you not tell me all? Or, I hope my boy fears not to trust his mother with his thoughts."

As she spoke she thus moved her seat close to where Rurik sat, and placed her head upon his arm.

"Tell me, my boy," she added, in a low, perdeep enough now. "what is it that dwells thus upon your mind."

Rurik reached out and took his mother's hand, and having gazed for some moments into her face he said,—

"Surely, my mother, I have nothing in my soul that I would hide from thee. If I have kept this thing of thought to myself with unseemly silence it has been because I feared you would laugh at me if I told you of it."

"Ah, no, my son," the mother replied, almost reprovingly; "nothing that could claim such deep and absorbing consideration from a mind like yours would move me with derision. Speak plainly, and be sure of my sympathy."

A few moments more the youth gazed silently upon his mother, and then he answered,—

"All this thought has been of one person—of—of Rosalind Valdai."

Claudia Nevel started as she heard that name, and for while the color forsook her cheeks.

"What, my dear boy—what of her have you thought?" she asked, tremulously.

"What, but of one thing, could I think, my mother? You have seen her?"

"Yes, Rurik."

"And you have marked the grace—the loveliness—the soul-given beauty of the noble girl?"

"I know she is beautiful, my son; and she, that she is good,—at least, so I think."

"Then what but love could move me with deep thought of her? Oh, my mother, I do love her. I love her with the whole strength of my heart and soul."

"Alas, my Rurik, she will never dare love thee."

"You know not that," the youth quickly replied, his eyes burning deeply, and his open brow flushing. "Did I not know she loved me be sure I would never have allowed my thoughts such range. We were children together, and even then we loved. Fate has dealt differently by us in the years that have passed since those childhood times; but yet I am sure her love for me is not changed, save as affectionate age must change all the emotions of our natures into deeper, stronger lights and shades."

"But think, my boy: You, a mere artisan—she the offspring of nobility and the ward of a Duke—a stern, cold, proud aristocrat, who looks upon our station only as harsh masters look upon their beasts of burden. I fear you will find little else but misery in such a course of thought."

"All hope, my mother, I will see Rosalind; and if she loves me as I love her—and if she would accept my hand—"

"Hush, my boy. Do not cherish such hopes. Why should she mate with thee when the richest nobles of the land would kneel for her hand?"

"Hold," cried Rurik, starting to his feet—his handsome face flushed, and his bright eye burning. "Speak not thus,—at least, not now. I flatter not myself, but I claim a soul as pure, and a heart as noble, as any man in the land. My mind is as clear; my hopes as high; my ambition as true to real greatness, and my will as firm, as any of them. If Rosalind seeks the love of a true heart, and the protection of strong arms and determined success, then I fear not to place myself by the side of any suitor in the land. But if she seeks immediate wealth, and the glitter of some high-sounding title, then—Ah, I know she does not. But let it pass now. I will see her."

Claudia would not oppose the wishes of her son, and she said no more upon the subject. For a while nothing further was said, until Rurik remarked upon the increasing force of the storm.

"Hark!" uttered his mother, bending her ear in a listening attitude. "Was that a knock upon our door?"

"Surely no one is out on such a night that could seek shelter here," returned Rurik. "You must have—"

The youth did not finish the sentence, for at that moment the knock came so loud that it was not to be mistaken. The youth caught up the candle and hastened to the door. He opened it, but the blast came rushing in, whirling a cloud of snow into Rurik's face, and extinguishing the light at once.

"Is there any one here?" the gun-maker asked, bowing his head and shielding his eyes from the driving snow with one hand.

"Yes," returned a voice from the Stygian darkness. "In God's name let me in, or I shall perish."

Then follow quickly," said Rurik. "Here—give me your hand.—There—now come."

The youth found the blindly plowed headplowed with the softest fur—and having led the invisible applicant into the hall he closed the door, and then led the way to the kitchen. As soon as the candle was relighted Rurik turned and gazed upon the new-comer. It was a monk—and habited something like one of the Black monks of St. Michael. He was of medium height, and possessed a rotundity of person which was enough to behold. He was fat and unwieldy, and waddled about with longlasting steps. His huge black robe, which reached from his chin to his toes, was covered about the waist with a sash of the same color, and the sleeves, which lay upon the shoulders and back, presented a striking contrast. Rurik brushed away the snow with his own hand, and having taken his visitor's thick fur bonnet the latter took a seat near the fire.

Before a word was spoken the youthful host carefully examined his guest's features; and the latter seemed equally desirous of discovering what manner of people he had fallen in with. The monk's face was a peculiar one. The features were very dark and prominent, and almost angular in their strongly marked outlines. His brow was very fair in natural development, and his eyes were dark and brilliant. The slight circle of hair that escaped from beneath the tight skull-cap which he retained upon his head was somewhat tinged with silver, though his face did not betray such advanced age as this silvery hair would seem to indicate.

"You have been caught in a severe storm, good father," said the youth, after his guest had somewhat recovered from the effects of the cold.

"Aye—that have I, my son," the monk returned, in a deep, rumbling tone. "I left the Kremlin this morning, little thinking of such a change. The storm has commenced since I started on my return. About half a mile from here my horse got foundered in the snow, and I left him with an honest peasant, and then started to make the rest of my way on foot; but I got bewildered wildly. The driving snow blinded me, and the piling drifts swallowed me up at every dozen steps. My body is not very well adapted to such work—Ha, ha, ha. But I saw your light, and I determined to seek shelter here for the night. By St. Michael, but this is a most welcome haven! you are my deliverer here."

"As father,—we try to be comfortable," said Rurik. "My mother could tell you of such a winter in some of the dwellings which stand hereabouts."

The monk made no answer to this save a sort of complimentary nod; and shortly afterwards the youth asked,—

"Do you belong here in the city, good father?"

"Aye—at present I do," the monk returned. And then, with a smile, he added,—"I suppose you would like to know whom you have thus received. My name is Valdimir, and my home is wherever I may chance to be on God's herthage. At present I am residing here in Moscow. There—could you ask me to be more frank?"

Rurik smiled, but he made no direct reply. He was too deeply interested in the case of the monk to enter with such eagerness into conversation. At length the guest asked if he could be accommodated with some sleeping place, and having answered in the affirmative the youth lighted another candle and conducted him to a chamber which was located directly over the kitchen, and which was very well warmed by some of the stove tubes that connected with the furnace below.

"Mother," uttered Rurik, as soon as he had returned to the kitchen, "what is the man?"

"How should I know?" the woman replied.

"But have you never seen him before?" Rurik asked, in a somewhat eager tone.

"I cannot tell, my son. His face must surely call up some strange emotions in my mind, but I think I never saw him before."

"And yet he seems familiar to me," the son resumed. "Those eyes I surely have seen before, but to save my soul I cannot remember when nor where."

And so Rurik pondered and pondered, but to no avail. After he had retired to his bed he lay awake and thought of the strange face; and all through the night the same word were but startling visions of the Black Monk.

CHAPTER II.

A STRANGE PROCEEDING.

When Rurik came down in the morning he found the monk already there, and breakfast nearly ready. But little was said during the meal time; for the monk seemed busy with thoughts of his own, and Rurik was too much engaged in studying the strange man's features, and pondering upon the various doubts and surmises that had entered his mind. After the meal was over the monk accompanied the gunmaker to his shop, and there he spent some time in examining the quaint articles of machinery that were used in the manufacture of arms.

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Rurie was engaged in finishing a pair of pistols, and for some minutes the monk had stood silently by his side watching his movements. At length the youth stopped in his work and laid the pistol down.

"Excuse me, good father," he said, rather nervously, at the same time gazing his visitor in the face; "but I must ask you a question. Where have I seen you before?"

"How should I know?" the monk returned, with a smile.

"Why!—" resumed Rurie, with some hesitancy, "I knew not but that you might enlighten me. I have surely seen you somewhere."

"And are there not hundreds whom you have seen in this great city—ay, thousands—whom you might recognize as you recognize me?"

"Ah—it may be so; but not like this. There may be a thousand faces I would recollect to have seen, but not one of them would excite even a passing emotion in my soul. But your face calls up some powerful emotion—some startling memory of the past—which bothers me. Who are you, good father? When are you?" Where have we met before? Was it in Spain?"

"No," said Valdimir, with a shake of the head. And then with a more serious shade upon his face, he added: "Let this pass now. I will not deny to you that there may be some grounds for your strange fancies; but I assure you most assuredly that until last night I never came in direct companionship with you before; —at any rate, not to my knowledge. You have acted the Good Samaritan towards me, and I hope I may sometime return the favor."

"No, no," quickly responded the youth, "If you return it then it will be a favor no more. I have only done for you what every man should do to his neighbor; and so far from accepting thanks for my services, I would rather give them for the occasion, for I know of no source of joy so pure and unalloyed as that which the feeling in the soul which tells us we have done a good act."

The dark monk reached forth and took the youthful artisan's hand, and with more than ordinary emotion he said:

"You touch the harp-strings of the soul with a noble hand, my son, and if any deed of kindness can give me joy it will be a deed for you. We may meet again, and until then I can only say, God bless and prosper thee."

With these words the monk turned away, and ere Rurie could command presence of mind enough to follow him he had gone from the house. The youth was astonished at nothing, but what the varied emotions that went leaping through his mind he could neither so connected thought nor feeling in the soul which tells us we have done a good act."

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After the monk was gone Rurie returned to his bench and resumed his work. He asked his boy if he had ever seen the strange man before, but Paul only shook his head, and answered dubiously.

"What do you mean?" the gun-maker asked, gazing the boy in the face. "Do you think you have seen him before?"

"I cannot tell, my master. I may have seen him before, and I may not. But surely you would not suppose that my memory would serve you better than your own."

Rurie was not fully assured by this answer. He gazed into Paul's face, and he fancied he detected some show of intelligence there which had not been spoken. But he resolved to ask no more questions at present. He had asked enough, he thought, upon such a subject, and he made up his mind to bother himself no more about it, feeling sure that if his boy knew anything which would be for his master's interest to know it would be communicated in due season. So he applied himself anew to his work and at noon the pistols were finished.

Towards the middle of the afternoon, just as Rurie had finished tempering some parts of a gun-lock, the back door of his shop was opened, and two men entered. They were young men, dressed in costly furs, and both of them stout and good-looking. The gun-maker recognized them as the Count Conrad Dumouff and his friend Stephen Gonn.

"I think I speak with Rurie Nevel," said the Count, moving forward.

"You do," returned Rurie, not at all surprised by the visit, since people of all classes were in the habit of calling at his place to order arms.

The Count turned a chair paler than before, and his nether lip trembled; but Rurie thought that might be the result of coming from the cold into a warm place. However, he was soon undeceived, for the Count's next remark was significant:

"I see acquainted with the Lady Rosalind Valdai?" he said.

"I am," returned Rurie, now beginning to wonder.

"Well, sir," resumed Dumouff, with much haughtiness, "perhaps my business can be quickly and satisfactorily settled. It is my desire to make the Lady Rosalind my wife."

Rurie Nevel started at these words, and he clasped his hands to hide their tremulousness. But he was not long debating upon an answer.

"And why have you come to me with this information, sir?" he asked.

"You should know that already. Do you not love the lady?"

"I can my soul, Sir Count, you ask me a strange question. What right have you to question me upon such a theme?"

"The right that every man has to pave the way for his own rights," replied Dumouff, sharply. "But if you choose not to answer, let it pass. I know you do love the lady. And now I ask you to renounce all claims to her hand."

"By St. Paul, Sir Count, your tongue runs into strange moods of speech. I renounce all claims to Rosalind Valdai's hand!—Wa'n't so you meant?"

"Ay, sir—precisely so."

"Perhaps you will inform me what claims I may have in that quarter," Rurie returned, with some tremulousness in his tone, for the very subject was one that moved him deeply.

"Rurie Nevel you shall not my that I did not make myself fully understood, and hence I will explain." The Count spoke this as speak a man who feels that he is doing a very condescending thing, and in the same tone he proceeded: "The Lady Rosalind is of noble parentage and very wealthy. My own station and wealth are equal with hers. My station, at all events, is such that I can claim the highest in the realm. So a single denial from you, to the effect that you are never going after her hand, is all that is necessary. You understand me, I trust. We seek this only for the fair lady's own good. Of course, you must be aware that the Duke would never consent to her union with you; and yet he would wish to have your denial to show to Rosalind when he announces his decision. I have a paper here all drawn up, and all that will be necessary is simply your signature. Here—it is only a plain, simple matter, and a part that you have no hopes, nor thoughts of seeking the hand of the lady in marriage."

As the Count spoke he drew a paper from the bosom of his martien doublet, and having opened it he handed it towards the gun-maker. But Rurie took it not. He drew back and gazed the visitor sternly in the face.

"Sir Count," he uttered, in a tone full of noble indignation, "what do you suppose I am? Do you mean to tell me that Olga, Duke of Tula, has considered you fit to obtain such a renunciation of me?"

"Stephen," spoke the Count, turning to his companion, "you heard the indiscretion the Duke gave me this morning?"

"Aye," returned Gonn, fixing his specs to Rurie. "I did hear; and you have stated the case plainly."

"I may be much surprised as yourself," resumed the Count, haughtily, "at this strange taste of the Duke. Why he should seek this signed from you I can only imagine upon his desire to call up no regrets in the bosom of his fair ward. He knows that she was once intimate with you, and that she now feels a warm friendship for you. For her sake he would have this signed from you."

"But how for her sake?" asked Rurie.

"Why," returned Dumouff, do you not see? Rosalind, in the simplicity of her heart, may think that you—as that you might claim her love; and out of pure principle grant it to you simply because you were the first claimant."

"But I never claimed her love," said Rurie, warmly. "If she loves me, she loves me from her own heart. With the noble Duke I have not spoke but once, and then he came here for me to temper his sword. If you would marry with the lady, do so; and if you seek help in the work, seek it from those who have some power in the matter."

"You mistake, sir," uttered the Count, hotly. "I seek not power now. I only seek a simple word from one who has been by circumstances, even as a beggar, having saved the life of a king, may, through royal gratitude, wield an influence. Will you sign the paper?"

Now all this seemed very strange to Rurie, and he knew that there was something behind the curtain which he had not the opportunity to know. He knew the proud and stubborn Duke well enough to know that he never would have sent such a message as this but for some design more than had yet appeared. In short, he could not understand it. The matter was to him both dark and complex, and its face was in direct conflict with the nature of the man from whom it now appeared to have emanated. Rurie hesitated upon this a few moments, and he made up his mind that he would on no account yield his assent to the strange request that had been made him.

"Sir Count," he said, calmly and surely, "you have plainly stated your proposition, and I will as plainly answer. I cannot sign the paper."

"Ha!" gasped Dumouff, in quick passion. "Do you refuse?"

"Most flatly."

For a few moments the Count gazed into Rurie's face as though he doubted the evidence of his own senses.

"It is the Duke's command," he said, at length.

"The Duke of Tula holds no power of command over me," was the gun-maker's calm reply.

"Beware! Once more, I say—Sign this paper!"

"You but waste your breath, Sir Count, in speaking thus. You have my answer."

"By heavens, Rurie Nevel, you'll sign this!" the Count said, madly.

"Never, sir."

"But look ye, sirrah: Here is my whole future all in hand; and you are master of mine with this fair gift. Her guardian bids me get this paper of you ere I can have her hand. And now do you think I'll give it to you gratis? By the saints of heaven, I'll have your name to this, or I'll have your life!"

"Now your tongue runs away with you, Sir Count. I have given you my answer. Be sure that only one man on earth can prevail upon me to place my name upon that paper."

"And who is he?"

"I mean the Emperor."

"But you will sign it!" hissed Dumouff, turning pale with rage. "Here it is—sign! If you would live—sign!"

Perhaps he cannot write," suggested Urzen, contemptuously.

"Then he may make his mark," rejoined the Count, in the same contemptuous tone.

"It might not require much more urging to induce me to make my mark in a manner not at all agreeable to you, sir," the youth returned, with his teeth now set, and the dark veins upon his brow starting more plainly out. "You have come upon my premises, and you have made your errand known. You now have your answer, and for your own sake—for my sake—beg you to leave me."

"Will you sign that paper?" cried Dumouff, shaking the missive furiously and crumpling it in his hand.

"Are you mad, Sir Count? Do you think me a fool?"

"Aye—a consummate one."

"Then," returned Rurie, with a curl of utter contempt upon his finely-chiselled lip, "you need have no further dealings with me. There is my door, sir."

For some moments Count Dumouff seemed as much to speak from very rage. At length some deep, anxious purpose in obtaining Rurie's name to that paper; and to be thus thwarted by a common artisan was maddening to one who, like him, heard all his force of character upon his title.

"Sign!" he hissed.

"Fool!" uttered Rurie, unable longer to contain himself in view of such stupid persistance. "Have you not had enough of this?"

"Look!—look what I will have. Will you sign?"

"Once more—No!"

"Then, by heavens, you shall know what it is to thwart such as me! How's that?"

As these words passed from the Count's lips in a low, hissing whisper, he aimed a blow with his left at Rurie's face. The gun-maker had not dreamed of such a dastard act, and he was not prepared for it. Yet he dodged it sufficiently to escape the mark upon his face, receiving the blow lightly upon the side of the head. But he stepped and his counter came. As the Count drew back Rurie dealt him a blow upon the brow that felled him to the floor like a dead ox.

"Beware, Stephen Urzen!" he whispered to the Count's companion, as that individual made a movement towards his fallen friend. "Beware! I am not myself now, and you are safest where you are."

The man thus addressed viewed the gun-maker a few moments, and he seemed to conclude that he had better avoid a personal encounter, for he kept forward, and he went to the side of his fallen friend and assisted him to his feet.

"Count Dumouff," said he, in a whisper that a few moments's is silence. His face was ashen pale, and his wholeframe quivered. Upon the countenance of the fallen lord spot where he had been struck, but the skin was not broken.

"Rurie Nevel," he said, in a hissing, maddened tone, "you will hear from me. The spirit of a vengeance such as mine can overlook your plebeian stock."

And with this he turned away.

"Paul," said the gun-maker, turning to his boy, after the men had gone, "not a word of this to my mother. Be sure."

CHAPTER III.

LOVE.

That night Rurie Nevel had strange fancies while waking, and strange dreams while sleeping. Long and deeply did he ponder upon the strange business which had called Count Dumouff to his shop, and in no way, under no light, could he get any reason from it. Why he, a poor artisan who had never spoken with the Duke, save once on common business, and who was so far down in the social scale, should have been the chosen one to have his name used to the bestowal of Rosalind Valdai's hand, was beyond his ken. He was but a poor artist mechanic, and the Duke was a prince of high nobility—and she was under the legal guardianship of the Duke, whom, so far as she was concerned was he. And again—Conrad Dumouff was a Count, and reputed to be wealthy. Even he saw, he was somewhat handsome, but then a majority of his compeers were the same. Now, if this Count loved the lady Rosalind, and had asked for her hand, and the Duke was willing he should have it, why had this extraordinary proposal been sent to the poor gun-maker?

Rurie asked this question of himself a hundred times. He would commence and lay down all the premises in his mind, and then he would try to make the deduction; but no reasonable one could he arrive at. One thought clung after him, like a dim spectre at night, which Hope would make an angel, and which Fear would make a demon. Could it be possible that Rosalind had told her love for him, and that the Duke would pay some deference to it? He knew the Duke. Hope whispered that it might be so. But Fear would force itself in, and speak in tones so loud that they could not be misunderstood. Finally the youth resolved upon the only reasonable course. He concluded to let the matter rest, so far as his own surmises were concerned, until he could see Rosalind,—and that he was determined to do as soon as possible.

On the following morning, as he was preparing for breakfast, he saw Olga, the Duke pass by, and spoke with the Duchess Olga. He thought he, is the time for the visit to Rosalind; and as soon as he had eaten his breakfast he prepared for the visit. He dressed well, and no man in Moscow had a nobler look when the dust of toil was removed from his brow and garb.

"Paul," he said, entering the shop where the boy was at work, "I may be back at noon. At any rate, such is my intention; and if either of them men call who were here yesterday, you may tell them so."

"But," returned the lad, "if they ask me any questions?"

"Answer them as you think best."

"And if they should ask me if you would fight?"

"Tell them that I hold my life as too dear at the expense of an insult."

"But surely, my master, the Count will challenge you."

"I think he will. And," added Rurie, as an entire new thought came to his mind, "perhaps he come here to create a quarrel to that end. By my soul, I think he did."

"I am sure of it," said Paul.

A moment Rurie's frame quivered with suppressed passion, and then he said,—

"Let them come—and if they come—or if either of them comes, while I am gone—tell them, or him, that I am their very humble servant at all things reasonable."

Paul promised, and then the gun-maker turned away. In the hall he threw on his heavy fur cloak, and having reached the nearest hackney he took a horn and sledge and started off for the Kremlin, within which the duke resided.

Within one of the sumptuously furnished apartments of the palace of the Duke of Tula sat Rosalind Valdai. She was a beautiful girl; moulded in perfect form, with the full flush of health and vigor, and possessing a face of peculiar loveliness and intelligence. She was only nineteen years of age, and she had been ten years an orphan. Her hair was of a golden hue, and the sunlight loved to dwell amid the clustering curls. Her eyes, which were of a deep liquid blue, sparkled brightly when she was happy; and when she smiled the lovely dimples of her cheeks held the smile even after it had faded from the lips. There was nothing of the artificial in her face—nothing proud, nothing haughty; but gentleness and love were the true elements of her soul, and she could only be happy when she knew that all were truly loved. She liked respect, but she spurned that respect which only aims at outward show, while the heart may be rushing with vilest sensualism.

Rosalind sat there, in the apartment which was her own by her own private rule, and she was sad and thoughtful. One fair hand supported her pure brow, while with the other she twisted the cue of the silken tassel that confined her heavy robe. Thus she sat when the door of her apartment was opened, and a young girl entered. This new comer was a small, fair creature, bright and quick, with that raven hair, and those large, dark eyes of dreamy light which bespeak the child of Modern blood. Her name was Zenobie, and she was now about sixteen years of age. Rosalind's father had picked her up on the battle field from which the Turks had fled, and being unable to find any claimants he had brought her home, then quite an infant. And now she was Rosalind's attendant and companion. She loved her kind mistress, and would have laid down life itself in the service.

"How now, Zenobie!" asked Rosalind, as she noticed the girl particularly.

"There is a gentleman below who would see you," the girl replied.

"Then tell him I cannot see him," said Rosalind, troubling.

"But this is Rurie Nevel, my mistress."

Rurie!" uttered the lady, quickly, starting up, while the rich blood mounted to her brow and temples. "O, I am glad he has come. My heart must surely answered. Lead him hither, Zenobie."

The girl departed, and ere long afterwards Rurie entered. The lady met him, walked quickly to where Rosalind had arisen to her feet, and taking one of her hands in both his own he pressed it to his lips. He had a well-formed speech upon his lips when he entered the room, but these gone now. He could only gaze into the lovely face before him and murmur the name that sounded so sweetly on his ear. He felt that he could not then trust each an attempt, and then he spoke with more freedom.

"Lady," he said, after he had taken a seat, "you will pardon me for this visit when you know its cause. And you will pardon me, too, if I speak plainly what I have to speak."

"Surely, sir——"

"Call me Rurie. Let us at least not forget the friendship of childhood."

"Then I am not a lady," said Rosalind, smiling.

"No, Rosalind."

"Ah, Rurie."

As we were in childhood," whispered the youth.

"In all but years," returned Rosalind, in the same low tone.

"And I may wear the same image in my heart?"

"I cannot cast it from mine if I would."

"The image of childhood, dear Rosalind?"

"Aye—save that it has grown to manhood, dear Rurie."

What more could he ask for love? He had not aimed at this confession so soon. But he had it not from him now. He gazed a moment into the fair maiden's kindling eye, and he saw in its love-lit rays gathering there and in happy smile working its way about the rosy lips, and away into the joyous dimples, he saw that he came and clasped the faulty loved one to his bosom.

"Oh, I am not deceived in this," he murmured. "Speak, dearest one!"

"I cannot forget the love of the happy times agone," the noble girl replied, gazing up through her happy tears. "Oh, how many and many an hour have I prayed to God that those days might return, and that the one true heart of earth I loved might be mine once more. Rurie, why should I hide the truth, or why act it aside. To me thou art all in all. I have no one else to love, and none to love me else, save the noble girl who brought you hither. I can tell you no more."

Happy Rurie! Happy at that moment—forgetting all else but the love that gleamed out upon him then, and clasping the cherished object so ardently to his bosom.

But the moments flew on, and at length his mind came to the subject of his visit.

"Rosalind," he said, holding one of her fair hands in his grasp, "you know the Count Conrad Dumouff?"

"Aye," returned the maiden, with a shudder. "He is here very often, and he has forced himself upon my companionship when, if he had sense, he must have known I liked it not."

"He is a suitor for your hand, is he not?"

"He was; but he is not now."

"Not now!" repeated Rurie, with surprise. "What mean you?"

"Why—simply that he has asked the Duke for my hand, and that he was answered in the negative."

"Did you hear the Duke answer him so?"

"No; but so the Duke assured me he had done. But what mean you?"

"I will tell you. Yesterday the Count came to my dwelling, accompanied by Stephen Urzen. He had a paper drawn up by the Duke's own hand, in which I was made to say—or rather, by which the writer said—that he disclaimed all pretentions to your hand, and that he wished not to marry you.—That he freely gave me up, according to such which the sphere of his own social circle some companion when he wished. And this I was asked to sign."

"Ha!"

"Yes,—but by the Duke's orders."

"Oh—it cannot be," uttered the fair girl, trembling.

"And he further assured me that the Duke had requested him to obtain my signature therefore that he might receive your hand without impediment."

"So that the Count might receive my hand?"

"Yes."

"But the Duke assured me only yesterday that I should be troubled no more with the Count. May there not be some mistake?"

"There can be none on my part. The interview was in the Duke's own hand."

"But you did not sign it."

"Ask me if I took my own life—if I made a career for self I loved——"

"It is strange," the maiden murmured, bowing her head a few moments. "And yet," she added, looking up into her companion's face, "I do not think the Duke would be treacherous?"

"He may be," answered Rurie. "He knows how lightly our emperor holds many of his titles, and perhaps he fears that if this matter goes to the imperial ear, and your hand claim the right to marry with whom you pleased, Peter would grant your prayer. Hence he stated to get my refusal in such a shape as may have a clearer field in which to move. Do you know how the Duke's affairs stand at present?"

Rosalind thought awhile on this question, and then, while a startled expression came to her face she said,—

"Rurie, I do remember now that between the Duke and young Dumouff there is some matter of dispute. There is some question of inheritance."

"Ah," uttered the youth earnestly. "How is that?"

"Why—as near as I can understand it, there was a dispute between the Duke and the elder Dumouff concerning the ownership of a forest, the estate on the Don, in Kalugs; and since the father's death Conrad has maintained his family claim. I do not know the rights of it, and Conrad married sisters, and this estate belonged to them."

"And now," suggested Rurie, "may not the Duke mean to compromise this matter by giving your hand to the Count, and taking Dorsten in exchange?"

"Oh, I cannot think so," the maiden returned, earnestly, "for I know that he does not so think. He is kind to me, I am sure. He loves me as though I were his own child. I know he does, for he is a thousand times too generous. He is mindful of my comfort, and anticipates my every want. No, no—if he is deceiving any one he must be deceiving himself."

Rurie started as the new suspicion flashed upon him. Had the Duke sent Dumouff upon that mission on purpose to get him out of the way. "By my soul," thought the youth to himself, "the Duke knows that I have taught the swordplay, and he knows that I am not one to be so much for me. So he thinks in this subtle way to make me an object of loathing like of a plague." But the youth was discreet not to let Rosalind know of this. He knew she would be unhappy if he knew that a duel was likely to come off between himself and the Count.

After some minutes of comparative silence, Rurie touched upon a point which lay very near his heart.

"Rosalind," he said, taking both her hands in his own, "there is one point upon which we have never spoken; and I know you would have me speak plainly upon it. It is upon my situation. My father and your father fought side by side, but my father fell, while yours returned to his home. For his eminent services your father received a title and a noble estate from the grateful Czar Peter, while my father was early forgotten. Hence our stations are now widely different. Yet I am not poor. No cifer man in the empire can compete with me in the manufacture of arms, and from my labor I derive a handsome income. You know all that. And now, if other obstacles were removed, would you give me your hand, and become mine for life?"

"Aye, Rurie," the noble girl answered, with beaming eyes, and a joyful expression of countenance. "Were you reduced to the lowest estate of poverty, so long as your generous, pure soul was free, I should only be the more anxious

to lift you up. Oh, my love knows only the heart whereon it is secured, and for my future of joy I ask only the truth of my husband's love."

"Bless you, dearest," Marie murmured, clasping the fair being to his bosom. And for a long while Rosalind's head lay pillowed upon the shoulder of the man she so truly, fondly loved.

That was not the time for bringing forward doubts and fears. Marie had many questions in his mind concerning the impedimenta that stood in the way of their union, but he kept them to himself now. At length he arose to take his departure, and he simply said, as he drew the shawl up again:

"You will not allow the Duke to give your hand away."

"Never, Rarie."

"If he asks you for your hand to bestow upon any of his friends, you will tell him——"

"That my heart is not mine to give, and that my hand cannot go without it."

"Oh—bless you, Rosalind—bless you. God keep and guard you ever."

There was one warm, ardent pressure of lip to lip, and then Marie Novel turned away, and was soon in the open court. Here he entered his sledge, and then drove to the barracks in the Khitagorod, where he inquired for Alario Orea, a lieutenant of the guard. The officer was quickly found, and as he met Marie his salutation was warm and cordial. He was a young man, not over five-and-twenty, and one of the finest looking soldiers in the guard.

"Alario," said the gun-maker, after the first friendly salutations had passed, "I may have a meeting with Conrad Count Dumcouf. He has sought a quarrel—insulted me most grossly—hired a blow at my head—and I knocked him down. You can judge as well as I what the result must be."

"Most surely he will challenge you," cried the officer, excitedly.

"So I think," resumed Marie, calmly. "And now will serve me in the event?"

"With pleasure."

"I may refer his messenger to you?"

"Yes—surely. And how shall I act? What will you do?"

"Knock him down again under the same provocation."

"I understand. You wish to retract nothing?"

"No. Listen: I will tell you all since I took your aid."

And thereupon Marie went on and related all had that occurred at the time of the Count's visit to his shop.

"Good!" uttered Alario, as the gun-maker finished. "He must challenge you, and then you'll punish him. He's too proud now. He can handle some of his Hyrcan who associate with him; and perhaps he thinks he can do the same when he comes out among the border men. But never mind—I will be punctual and faithful."

Marie reached home just as his mother was placing the board for dinner. He often went away on business, and she thought not of asking him any questions.

CHAPTER IV
THE CHALLENGE.

In the afternoon Marie retired to his shop, where he went at work upon a gun which had been ordered some days before. As yet he had said nothing to Paul concerning the affair of the day before since his return from the Kremlin. He asked him now, however, if any one had called.

"Only the monk," returned Paul, without seeming to consider that there was anything very important in the visit.

"Do you mean the black monk—Ouladimir?" asked the young man starting.

"Yes, my master. He called here about the middle of the forenoon. He wanted one of the small daggers with the pearl hilt."

"And did you let him have one?"

"Certainly. He paid me four ducats for it, and would have paid more had I been willing to take it."

"And did he make any conversation?"

"Yes. He asked me why the Count Dumcouf came here yesterday."

"Ha— How did he know of their visit?"

"He was waiting at the inn for a sledge when he overheard the Count and his companion conversing upon the subject."

"And did he ask you any questions touching the particulars?"

"Yes—many."

"And how answered you?"

"I told him the whole story, from beginning to end. I found he knew something of their purpose from what he accidentally overheard, and rather than have him go away full of surmises, I told him all."

"Of the message, too?"

"Yes, my master. I told him all that happened, from the showing of the paper which the Duke had drawn up, to the departure of the angry man."

"And what did the monk say?" Marie asked, very earnestly.

"Why—he said he knew the Count, and that he was a proud, reckless fellow, and worth but little in society. That was all. He did not seem to care much about it any way; only he said he should have done just as you did, and that every law of justice would have cut out. He had more curiosity than interest, though I can sure all his sympathies are with you."

"Very well," returned Marie. "It can matter but little what the monk thinks about it, though I would rather have him know the truth if he must know anything, for I would not be misunderstood."

"He understands it all now, my master; and I trust you are not offended at the liberty I took in telling him."

"Not at all, Paul—not at all."

Here the conversation dropped, and the work was resumed in silence. It was past three o'clock when Marie's mother came and informed him that a gentleman, in the house, would speak with him."

"Is it Stephen Urzen?" asked the youth. His mother said it was.

"Then bid him come out here."

Claudia retired, and in a few moments more the gentleman made his appearance.

"Marie Novel," he said, bowing very stiffly and haughtily, "I bring a message from the Count Dumcouf."

"Very well, sir," returned the gun-maker, proudly. "I am ready to receive it."

Thereupon Urzen drew a sealed note from his pocket and handed it to Marie, who took it and broke the seal. He opened it, and read as follows:

"BEAR NAVEL:—As result of the most aggravating nature has for the time leveled all distinctions of caste between us. Your blood only can wash out the stain. I would not murder you outright, and so to other way but this can I reach you. My friend, the bearer of this, will name all the arrangements. If you dare not meet me, say so, that all may know who is the coward. DAMCOUF."

When Marie had read the missive he crushed it in his hand, and placed its bearer some moments in the face without speaking.

"Will you answer?" asked Urzen. He spoke more softly than before, for there was a quivering in the gun-maker's face which he dared not provoke.

"Are you acquainted with Alario Orea, a lieutenant of the guard?"

"Yes, sir—I know him well."

"Then let me refer you to him. He will make all necessary arrangements, and I shall hold myself bound by his plans. I trust that is satisfactory?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then you and I need have no more to say."

"Only one point," said Urzen, with some little show of confusion. "You are the challenged party, and have the choice of weapons. The Count has not mentioned this—mind you, he has not; but I, as his friend, deem it no more than right to speak of it—I trust you will choose a gentleman's weapon. In the use of the pistol, or the gun, he is not versed."

"Which you thought I am," said Marie, with a contemptuous curl of the lip; for he knew that the man was lying. He could see by the fellow's very looks that Dumcouf had commanded silence him to broach this matter.

"Of course you are," returned Urzen.

"And the Count is most excellently versed in the use of the sword, is he not?"

"He is accounted a fine swordsman."

"Aye—so I thought. But it matters not to me. The thought had not entered my mind before; save that I supposed swords would be the only weapons thought of. However, Orea will settle it with you. I have given him no directions at all, save to serve you, as friends proper, and to act upon the understanding that if I have given offence to the Count, I would do the same again under provocation. You understand now?"

"I do, sir," returned Urzen, in a choking tone.

"Then wait a moment, and I will give you a message to Orea."

Thus speaking Marie went to his desk, and upon the bottom of the missive he had received from the Count he wrote:

"DEAR ALARIO:—I and title to you by the same hand that bore it to me, and you are hereby empowered to act for me as you may deem proper. I shall be governed strictly by your arrangements. BEAR."

Having written this he showed it to Urzen, and asked him if he would bear it to the Count's tenant. An affirmative reply was given, and then simply folding the note in the opposite way from the original fold, the gun-maker superscribed it anew to the lieutenant, and handed it to his visitor. Urzen took it, and with a stiff bow, but without speaking, he turned and left the place.

That evening, about eight o'clock, a sledge drove up to Marie's door, and Alario Orea entered the house. He called the youth aside, and informed him that the arrangements had all been made.

"Dumcouf is in a hurry," he said, "and we have appointed the meeting at ten o'clock to-morrow forenoon. It will take place at the head of the river just below the Vista Rift."

"And the weapons?" asked Marie.

"Swords," returned Orea. "The Count will bring his own, and he gives you the privilege of selecting such an one as you choose."

"I thank you, Alario, for your kindness thus far, and you may rest assured that I shall be prompt."

"Suppose I call here in the morning for you?" suggested the visitor.

"I should be pleased to have you do so."

"I will, then. I shall be along in good season with my sledge, and we will both reach the ground together."

Then it was arranged, and then Orea took his leave.

When Marie returned to his seat by the fireplace he noticed that his mother watched him narrowly, and with more than ordinary interest. He had once made up his mind that he would say nothing to his mother about the affair until it was over; but as the time was set, and the hour drew nigh, his mind wavered. When it was over where might he be? But he was cut short in his reflections by the voice of his parent.

"Marie," she said, and her voice trembled while she spoke, "you will pardon me for prying into your affairs, but I cannot hide from myself that something of more than usual moment is on the tapis with you. Why are these men calling to and fro? and why are you so thoughtful and moody? You know a mother's feelings—and you will pardon a mother's anxiety."

"Surely, my mother," the youth returned, gazing up for a moment, and then letting his eyes droop again. At length he assumed—for I had made up my mind to tell you all ere you spoke."

There was something deep and significant in Marie's tone, and his mother quickly caught the spark.

"What is it it?" she tremblingly uttered, moving her chair nearer to her child's side.

"Listen:" the young man said; and there upon he recalled the circumstances attending the visit of the Count Dumcouf to his shop. Then he told of his own visit to Rosalind, and his result; and then of the visit of Stephen Urzen.

"And now, my mother," he added, without waiting for any reply, "you know it all. You see how I am situated. Remember, our nation has reached its present point by successful war. The end of nation is built upon military law, and since our noble Emperor has opened the way of advancement to the lowest of his subjects who are brave and true, the nobility has looked upon with disgust upon all hands. Yet, my mother, I would have you speak."

For some moments Claudia Novel was silent. But at length she said, while a tear trembled in her eye:

"I have given one loved being up to my country's good. Russia took my husband from me, and I could ill afford now to lose my son. Yet, rather than one stain should rest upon his name I would see him dead before me. Marie, you know whether Dubrow would rest upon you were you to refuse this challenge."

"I will speak plainly, my dear mother," returned the youth in a tremulous tone, for his parent's emotion had moved him. "In my soul I should feel perfectly justified in refusing this meeting, for no principle of real honor is at stake. But then I should shrink now from this I should never meet another generous look in Moscow. Every one would think the Count had upon his side, and the word *coward* would ring always in my ears. It may be a false state of things—I feel that it really is so—but how can I help it? It is the curse of all great military epochs. Noble alone rank heroes, and so all must measure their honor by the standard of nobles. The Count carries even now upon his brow the mark of my hand, and all will say he has a right to demand satisfaction; though I know that he provoked the quarrel on purpose. I cannot refuse him on that ground of action, for he is above me in that. I must meet him."

"Then," said the mother, in a low, calm tone, but with much effort, "you shall not feel that your mother would thwart your design. If your own good judgment says, go—then go. If they bring your body to me in the strong grasp of death, I shall pray for the soul that has gone, and shall hope to meet you in the home of the redeemed. If you come back to me alive I shall thank God that you are spared; but alas! the joy will be clouded with the thought of blood upon your hands, and the knowledge that my joy is another's grief."

"No, no, my mother," cried Marie, quickly and earnestly. "I will not have a blow for my life's blood upon my hand if I can avoid it. My own life upon my own life will I take his. He has done all this himself—all. The Count never was his own, and the first blow was his. He struck me, I think, and now is not the responsibility his also?

"It is my son, so far as he alone is concerned. If you have any objections, speak now, I beg of you. I would not have you wounded in your own soul. But tell me—has not the Emperor made some law touching this practice of duelling?"

"Yes—but only the challenge is responsible. The challenged is held free from blame in the eyes of the law."

"Then I shall interpose no more objections," said the mother, as she tried to speak hopefully, but she could not hide the fearful sadness of her heart. "Could fervent prayer avert the blow, I should pray; but I can only pray as one without power."

A long time after this was passed in silence. Both of mother and son seemed to have every thing upon their minds which they wished to say, but dared not. But the former at length broke the awful reluctance.

"Marie, my son," she said, keeping back the tears that struggled for utterance in their sides, "is there any little word you would leave?—any matter of moment—"

"No," the boy answered, speaking calmly by effort. "I am young, and all is well. But I shall not fall."

"Alas—I am not too confident my son. Let no such assurance lead you to forget your God. I have heard of this Count. It was he who destroyed Ivan Mongloski, and left him in the duel. He is an expert swordsman, and surely means to kill you if he can."

"I am aware of that my mother. But do you not know that we are all prone to overlook our own powers when wondering upon the feats of others? You tell her as you please—But saying you that the only man who has ever yet overcome the Count at the sword-play was one of my own scholars. While in Spain I practised with some of the best swordsmen in the kingdom——But listen: I will send one to you. For yourself I can tell you nothing which you do not know; but yet you may see Rosalind. If you do, tell her—but you know my soul. You can tell her as you please—But I shall not fall."

It was now late, and ere long Marie kissed his mother, and then retired to his bed.

And the widow was left alone. With her eyes she followed the retreating form of her beloved son, and when he was gone from her sight she bowed her head and sobbed aloud!

When she reached her humble couch she knelt by the side thereof, and poured forth her pent up soul to God. When her head had pressed the pillow she tried to hope—she tried to fasten one hope in her mind; but she looked only into the blight. Not one ray of light reached her struggling soul. She opened her eyes of promise in vain—for she looked into a gloom so utter that out of its depths loomed only the blackness of Despair.

Sleep on Marie. But oh! couldst thou have known her fond mother's heart is racked there'd be no sleep for thee!

CHAPTER V.

On the following morning Marie was up betimes, and at the breakfast table not a word of the not all-absorbing theme was uttered. After the meal was finished the gun-maker went out to his shop and took down from one of the closets a long leathern case, in which were two swords, both of the same make and finish, only different in size. They were Toledo blades, and of most exquisite workmanship and finish. Marie took out the heaviest one, which was a two-edged weapon, with a cross bill of heavily gilded metal. He tested the point upon the floor and then, with all his weight he bent the blade until it touched the point. The little steel sprang back to its place with a sharp clang, and the texture was not started. Then he carefully felt of the blade upon the anvil with great force. The ring was sharp and clear, and the weapon remained unharmed.

"Ha, Paul Michael, Duke Moscow can not contain another blade like that. Damascus never saw a better."

Then spoke the gun-maker to his boy as he balanced the beautiful weapon in his hand.

"I think you are right, my master," the boy returned, who had held the blade in his hand with unbounded admiration. "But," he added, cautiously, "is not temper a blade like that?"

"Perhaps, if I had the steel. But I have it not. The steel of these two blades came from the mines of Golconda, and was wrought in a ponderous, two-handed affair, belonging to a Bengal chieftain. The metal possesses all the requirements of the best razor, with the elasticity of the most subtle spring. My old master at Toledo gave me these as a memento. Were I possessed of the sum of money he was once offered for this legend one you would hardly credit it."

"How much?" asked Paul, with a boy's curiosity.

"It was a sum equal to about seven hundred rubles."

"And yet he gave it away."

"Yes—for the price was but imaginary, while its worth to him was only commensurate with the good it did him. If he told the truth he gave it to me, and there was no particular gift as the best patterns I could wish for when making such."

Then this Marie put up the smaller sword, and then gave Paul a few directions about the work, promising to be back before night. The faithful boy took his head sadly as he received this promise, but he said nothing, and shortly afterwards Marie went into the house. Just then Alario Orea drew up to the door in his sledge.

Marie was all ready but putting on his bonnet and pelisse.—His mother was in the kitchen. He went to her with a smile upon his face. He put his arms about her and drew her to his bosom.

"God bless you, my mother.—I shall come back."

He dared stop to speak no more. Gently sealing his food mother upon a chair he turned and hurried from the place. In the hall he threw on his pelisse and bonnet, and then he opened the door and passed out.

"Have you a good weapon!" asked Orea, as the latter started on.

"I have a fair one. I think it will not deceive me," returned Marie.

"I asked," resumed Orea, "because Dumcouf prides himself upon the weapon he wears. It is a famous blade, and looks he can cut in twain the blade of any other weapon in Moscow with it."

"I have a good weapon," Marie said quietly; "and one which has stood more tests than most swords will bear." And after some further remarks in regard to the personal appearance of contending the making of the sword, and his possession of it.

The sledge they struck upon the river, and in half an hour more they reached the appointed spot. The day was beautiful. The sun shone brightly upon the glistening snow, and the air breathe more freely. He had been upon the ground but a few minutes when the other party came in sight around the head of the river.

As soon as the Count and his second had arrived, and the horses had been secured, the lieutenant proposed that they should repair to the building which was close at hand. This was a deserted log-house, which was unused and deserted in the winter, and it was proposed to go in there because the reflection of the strong sunlight from the bright snow was calculated to blind and blur the eye.

"Ha! what means that?" uttered Orea, as he saw a sledge just turning the head of the river with an officer in it.

"It is only a surgeon," replied Dumcouf. "I would not cut a man's flesh without giving him a fair chance to survive it."

"And then you may find him serviceable to yourself, eh?" suggested the lieutenant.

"Of course. There is no telling what may happen."

In a moment more the new sledge came up, and Marie recognized the inmate as an army surgeon whom he had seen before, though he knew not his name.

"Now for the old bone-house," cried Urzen.

"Aye," added Dumcouf. "Let us have this business done, for I would be back to dinner. I dine with Olga to-day, and a fair maiden awaits my coming."

"Notice him not," whispered Orea, who walked close by Rurie's side. "That is one of his chief points when engaged in an affair of this kind. He hopes to get you angry, and so undings your nerves."

"Never fear," returned the gun-maker. "He may not be only brags now danger to himself, for such efforts will find their point in the muscle of my arm."

The party halted when they reached the interior of the rough structure, and the Count threw off his pelisse and drew his sword. Rurie followed his example.

"Count," the latter said, as he moved a step forward, "ere we commence this work I will ask present to understand distinctly how I stand. I have been grossly insulted from the first. Without the least provocation from me you have found me most grossly, and this is the climax. So, before God and man, be the result upon your own head."

"Curs, lying knave——"

"Hold," cried the surgeon, laying his hand heavily upon the Count's arm. "You have no right to speak thus. Orea, you have promised when you do it. If you have come to fight, do so honorably."

An angry reply was upon Dumcouf's lips, but he did not speak it. He turned to his antagonist and said,—

"Will you measure weapons, sir? Mine may be a mite the longest. I seek no advantage; and I have one hour of the same length and weight as my own if you wish it."

"I am well satisfied as it is," replied Rurie, "Are you ready, your ground.——Are you ready?"

"I am!"

The two swords were crossed in an instant, with a clear, sharp clang.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

GIRLHOOD.

A clever girl, whose willingness to study equals the utmost zeal of her instructors, is encouraged and urged to gratify the ambition of her parents. But when does all that is required of it, and a good deal more, for it will not be properly to sleep at night. She lies awake, or has painful dreams, or frightens her friends by walking about in the partial sleep of somnambulism, and is frequently obliged to leave her studies for her bed by illness. It is almost certain that her general health has been sacrificed, or is about to be so, though it may require a medical eye to discern the proof. The functions of nutrition have been weakened, and perhaps vitiated; and if so, her habitually quickened pulse is only carrying the exhausted blood to her organs to afford materials for spilling their structure. Sudden and frequent fits of complete blushing will sometimes be born in already the seat of morbid deposit; or, after the fever, and during which none of her bodily functions go on as they ought, the fatal cough comes on, which shows that the lungs have been irritated. Or, if no such catastrophe is to happen, all the signs of vivacity of mind gradually disappear, and the precocious girl is hardly to be recognized in the dull and languid young woman.

BOYHOOD.

All other things alike, the boy who excels in games and feats of strength and skill, is most likely to excel in more important ways in manhood. To develope the mind, and let the bodily health shift for itself, is the way to get a painful blossom, but very little fruit. A late mistake is nearly as bad as a early. If the child be really extraordinary, it ought to make it the more easy to wait with confidence for what nature is evidently preparing to bestow. The experiment of forcing cannot safely be followed in education as in horticulture. If bodily health and vigor are given, the mental and moral endowments will be exercised at a disadvantage, if they are not rendered positively useless.

THE POOR.

In our intercourse with the poor we must not expect to find them faultless, or destitute of evil tempers, unthankful hearts, gross deception often, or ready to receive all the good we have them in many little ways that we think would be better and more comfortable. We must not expect to find the smooth temper governed by a smooth heart, or the kindness shown always understood as it is meant. How we must look around among our own kindred among our own people—above all, in our own hearts, and see what is found there, before we condemn, or be supposed to have done so much; and then we shall go forth better prepared to encounter those among whom we know it has done so little.

BAD LISTENERS.

There is no established code of conversation to be enacted by rote. The art of conversing agreeably can only be acquired by practice, and does not necessarily fall to the lot of every person who tries; indeed, those who try to converse agreeably usually fail. There should be no consciousness of *trying*; it should be a matter of spontaneous impulse. Avoid equally the two extremes of bashfulness and forwardness: the former would make you reflexive, the latter offensive. Conversation involves listening as well as talking. Many people talk fluently enough, yet they do not converse well, because they are bad listeners.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 19.

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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THE NEW YORK LEDGER can be obtained at all the periodical and newspaper stores throughout the United States and Canada.

OUR DEVELOPES.

With this number of the LEDGER, we commence a NEW TASK, by that popular novelist, SYLVANUS COBB, JR. It is decidedly one of the most entertaining narratives ever published in a newspaper; and, as we remarked last week, must add to Mr. COBB'S well-earned reputation. In addition to this continued Tale, we will soon (next week, probably,) begin to publish some short stories, complete in each number, by Mr. COBB. The numerous admirers of these readers will doubtless be gratified to learn that we have secured the services of their favorite.

At the present time, the LEDGER'S prospects are highly flattering. Our circulation is increasing with unexampled rapidity; and everything that a liberal management can do to still increase it, and make the LEDGER even more interesting and attractive, will most assuredly be done. Heretofore the *Home* and the *Fireside*, the *Observer*, and the *Independent*, were considered the leading weeklies covering the Tribune of our city, in point of circulation; but now the circulation of the LEDGER is larger by several thousands than all three of them put together.

Why this immense circulation? the reader is probably ready to ask. Simply because we have unlimited means(nearly,)—employed the best and most popular writers, artists, &c., &c., and labored almost day and night ourself. FANNY FERN'S services are not monopolized,—no other paper could offer any inducement to her to write a line for them. Mrs. SIGOURNEY furnishes us with some of her very loftiest pieces—one of them, by the way, will be found in our columns this week. But other literary celebrities are almost too numerous to mention; still, we cannot overlook the names of MARY STARNE GIBSON, MRS. MARY C. VANDERBILT, and "UTICA."

The engravings in the LEDGER have elicited universal commendation. Our artist, MR. THWAITES, is acknowledged to be the best on his line in this country; and we have secured his services regularly—he will not disclose a rule for any other weekly. Our engravers, too, MESSRS. DOBBITT & HOOPER, understand their business to perfection.

Need we say anything more? Yes!—we will not make one remark, and that is, that the LEDGER, notwithstanding it has so many attractions over other and higher-priced papers, is sold at one cent, and in some cases two cents less than its rivals. We have not the price down to the lowest possible figure—ports cents—but we mean to make as much money as our contemporaries, by our immensely larger circulation.

THE GREAT MOVING, LIVING CITY.

A farmer from one of our Western States, if placed, for the first time, about six o'clock in the evening on any of the great thoroughfares of New York, near the heart of the city, would experience the same emotions of wonder and curiosity as an untutored Indian from the Rocky Mountains in the presence of the warring ebb and flow of the Atlantic. As he gazed on the multitudes of men and women, of boys and girls, hurrying like a mighty current up Broadway, or along Chatham street and the Bowery, or across the ferries to Brooklyn and New Jersey, he would naturally ask : "Whence this tide of human beings, and whither does it flow?"

This daily ebb and flow of our population occurring as regularly every morning and evening, is seldom noticed or studied by those who mingle in the crowd. To a stranger, however, it forms one of the most remarkable and attractive exhibitions which our city affords. He sees both sexes, all classes, every age, size, shape, and color, crowded close together, moving along with hasty steps in the same direction, and scarcely a single passenger attempting to go in his way against the stream. The people of New York move before him as in a panorama; specimens of every trade, class and profession are presented to his observation and study. He cannot wish for a better opportunity of becoming acquainted with the appearance and condition of our working population. There goes the mercbant and the errand boy, the porter, the clerk, the mechanic, the salesman, the editor,—and women of every class, from the poor sewing girl, to the rich lady of fashion returning from shopping or from a visit to her husband's place of business. The newsboy shouts out the name of the evening papers while the bundle under his arm, bespeaks, now, the shining coat of a comfortable-looking mechanic,—now the thread-bare dress of the honest mechanic,—now, faded gowns and arms half-covered by a scanty shawl, and again, rich flowing robes and ruffling silks. The merchant treads on the heels of the mechanic,—the mechanic on the heels of the slow errand-boy or wearied sweeper of the streets. The light, hearted clerk or porter jostles his wealthy employer; the thoughtless whistle in the ears of the studious. There a party of three or four abreast, walking slowly, almost block up the side-walk, while those behind are compelled to pause, and the velocity of the current is for a moment, like the backward movement of a wave when the tide is advancing on the shore. Almost every variety of human form and countenance seems to be there,—faces of every shape, hue and expression, reflecting all the varying moods, tempers and thoughts of every class from manhood to old age, and all the cares, pleasures, passions and feelings of the heart; weariness, anxiety and a painful expression of thoughtfulness, are visible in the stern, gestures and bearing of the majority in the vast procession. Yet the current with its incessant hum of voices and busy feet never pauses to rest; it is impatient of delay and flows onward like a river with small streams turning aside from it, here and there, until the whole disappears or is lost in the distance.

This daily current, flowing, in the morning from the upper part of the city, in the centre towards its extremities, is caused by the concentration of the large wholesale warehouses with their offices at the lower end of the island. In fact, the New Amsterdam of the Dutch has become the centre of our great city, extending over the greater part of Manhattan Island, over a wide area on Long Island and along the shores of New Jersey. New Amsterdam is now an extensive manufacturing and wholesale establishment of which Wall street is only the counting-house. In this establishment, as into one vast receptacle, the tide of human beings flows in the morning; and from it, ebbs in the evening.

Strangers visiting New York cannot spend a leisure hour more profitably than in studying this city-life. In some of the streets and the children of which it is composed, their varied employments during the day and their amusements and cares of repose during the evening and night. And many a dull, heavy countenance that we have seen in the crowd would be lighted up with thought and feeling if its owner would only observe the current in which he is moving and consider that it is the object of his companions the innumerable cares, joys and sorrows which lie concealed as hidden forces in the human breast and keep this living tide in perpetual motion.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Early last month, the Marchioness of Londonderry, who is one of the richest and most aristocratic ladies in England, gave a reception to the laborers that work her coal mines, who assembled to the number of nearly four thousand, in an immense building erected for the occasion Moor, near Durham. The miners, or pitmen as they are technically called, were dressed in their usual dress and looked hearty and merry. The repast was bountiful, five hundred ladies graced the occasion, and the Marchioness of Vane presided, and the whole affair was highly satisfactory to all parties. According to an illustration of the scene given in the last No. of the London pictorials, a finer looking body of men than Lady Londonderry's pitmen, is seldom seen—certainly not in the favored city of London.

At the conclusion of the repast, the Marchioness addressed her guests, in a short speech, replete with admirable sentiments, and which concluded in the following words :

My friends, I advise you to frequent and support your reading rooms, your educational institutions, and to avoid the public houses—to be orderly, industrious and religious. I speak out of many years' experience, and I am his father. I will not detain you longer than to tell you how much pleasure it has given me to see you all here, and to express my hope that you will remember this and heed my words. I feel deeply the responsibility of my position, and I have thought it right to advise and counsel you to the best of my humble power; and I hope that while I am permitted to live among you, we may act in individually and collectively continue to endeavor to do our duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call us.

This speech was received with tumultuous applause, as the subscriber of which, the *Observer*, John Cuthbertson by name, rose from the body of the assembly, and thanked her Ladyship, on the part of his fellow-workmen, for the interest she had exhibited in their behalf; after which, three cheers were given for the Marchioness, who retired amidst considerable cheering.

Such a spectacle, with a public interchange of courtesy and mutual good-will between a coal-bearer and one of Britain's proudest patrician ladies, is certainly a significant sign of the times.

AMERICAN GALLANTRY.

A Frenchman gives the following account of American gallantry :

"Gallantry has deserted Europe : it has taken refuge in the United States. I proclaim it openly—It is in America that I have seen how gallantry is actually practised, spontaneously, disinterestedly. There is no compliment to pay to a woman ; there is no act a woman ; because she is, or will be, the mother of a citizen. If a good thing could be carried to an excess, I should say that the rights attributed to the fair sex are carried to excess. Women, who possess their power, they abuse it as tyrants do who know that there are no limits to their authority."

As an example of the abuse of the privilege of ladies he mentions the fact that some women will quickly accept a gentleman's seat in a car or steamboat without so much as saying 'thank you."—Is it not strange that French politeness is employed in this instance to compliment American gentlemen and to censure American ladies? The gentlemen will gladly receive the compliment; what will the ladies say to the censure?

GIVE US THE PROOFS.

Mr. Buchanan, in his late speech at the banquet given in his honor by the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of London, observed :—" I say nothing of the ladies, because I ought not to speak of them, although they are the fairest part of the creation." Certainly, this is a new and noble sentiment! He makes a promise at the beginning, and breaks it at the end of the same sentence. He says "I ought not to speak of the ladies;" why ought he not to speak of them? Can he prove his assertion, that "they are the fairest part of creation?" or can he prove that in this assertion he says nothing of the ladies? Give us the proofs, Mr. Buchanan.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by R. BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

PEEPS FROM UNDER A PARASOL.—NO. 3.

Look!

Which? How? Where?

Why *there*; don't you see? there's Potpillar Curtis.

Potpillar Curtis! go gods, what a name! Pity my ignorance Reader, I had not then heard of the great "Howadji;" the only Potpillar I knew of being that much abused animal which but never mind him; suffice it to say, I had not heard of "Howadji," and while I stood transfixed with his ridiculous cognomen, the coat tails, like his namesake's rivals, were disappearing in the distance. So I cannot describe him for you; but I give you my word, should I ever see him, to do him justice to the tips of his boots; which I understand are of indescribable polish. I have read his "Papers" though, and to speak in the style of the patronizing critics who review help-books, they are very well—*for a man.*

And speaking of books, here comes Walt. Whitman, author of "Leaves of Grass," which, by the way, I have not yet read. His shirt collar is turned off from his muscular throat, and his shoulders are thrown back as if to say in that fine, ample chest of his, his lungs had not sufficient play-room. Mark his voice: rich and full as an organ, and more of imaginative power in his every half-a-dozen words, than the most crowded thoroughfare, one would turn inside out searching on hearing it, is to be found. Such a voice is a gift rare as it is priceless. A fig for phrenology! Let me but hear the voice of a man or woman and I will tell you what all its owners are made of. One of the first things I noticed in New York, was the sharp, shrill, unmusical voices of the women, and especially of its women. How inevitably such discordchanting discord, breaks the spell of beauty!

Fair New Yorkers, keep your voices down if you would conquer.

By what magnetism has our mention of voice called up the form of Dr. LOWELL MASON? And yet, there he is, as majestic as Old Hundred and symphonious and sonorously as that canticle by *Tate*. I would like to see a pupil of his who does not love him. I defy any one to look at his noble, manly, benevolent face (as he leads the *Congregational Singing* on the Sabbath, in *Dr.* Alexander's church) with unmoistened eyes. Let the "Boston Academy" and oh! how befitting God's temple, the praises of "all the people." Should some conspiracy be formed to take him from us, and we were asked for us and ours, revisit our shores, oh, who, as his triumphal chariot wheels rolled by, would not cry out to his neighbor, in expression of the unutterable gratitude with which his own heart was filling?

That the mantle of the father should have fallen on the son, is not surprising; and they who have heard the organ-playing of WILLIAM MASON'S "Musical Matinées" must bear witness how this inherited gift has been enriched by liberal culture. Would to God we could hear oftener the sweet tones of his instrument, and especially in a church, as he leads the congregational singing. Then, indeed, would the people "all the people." Should some conspiracy be formed to take him from us, and we were asked for us and ours, revisit our shores, oh, who, as his triumphal chariot wheels rolled by, would not cry out to his neighbor, in expression of the unutterable gratitude with which his own heart was filling?

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RECTAL TEACHERS.

JERSEY CITY, April 6, 1856.

MR. LEDGER :—My son, a lad of fourteen years, who attends a private school in this city, was lately whipped very severely by his teacher, because he refused to give evidence against some of his schoolmates who had been detected in violations of the rules of the school. My son thinks his treatment was unjust and outrageous, and wishes me to send him to another school. He says he can never again respect his present teacher, or regard him as a friend after receiving that of aversion. What had I better do?

Truly yours, FATHER.

Your best course would probably be to investigate the matter thoroughly, and treat your son kindly with the same tender regard and inflexible justice that you would like to have extended toward yourself in the adjustment of a difficulty in which your feelings had become strongly enlisted. *Injustice* on the part of parents and teachers, has ruined many a bright and manly a noble girl. When we were a lad, we one day united with a number of other boys, and assembled in the corner of the yard, to stage, to attack, and, if we could, whip, some boys who lived in the upper part of the town, and attended school there. They had on the previous day whipped one of our associates, and we determined to punish them in return; and we did it, and most effectually. After the opening of school, on the next morning, our crivals complained to the master, (a man named McNair,) who called us all up, and, after severely lecturing and scanding us, he commenced to use the "rattan" still more severely on the heads and shoulders of each of us. When it came our turn, we growled quite fiercely at us, as we happened to be one of the ringleaders, and commanded us to hold out our hand. We quietly asked, "What for?" He repeated the command more sternly, "I told you to hold out your hand, Robert." We still refused, and again asked his reason. He wanted to know if we had not been engaged in the assault after we left school, yesterday. In those days we were just mischievious enough to be fearless, and we replied that we had; but that we did not consider that any of his business, as we did wrong *in school hours*, while under his charge, he had a right perhaps to punish us; but for any misconduct *out of school hours*, we were responsible to our parents alone. He now opened his eyes, and ordered us to leave the room (with which order we complied,) while he went through almost half a day's work in flogging the boys who were only in the second class. When he got through, he told us to remain in after school hours : we refused, on the ground that we were not guilty of any misconduct while in school, and at three o'clock we packed up our books to leave. He tried to stop us, and threatened to use the rattan, and did so at once. We then picked up a slate, and in a very excited manner told him that we would not sit at his desk. He fired it down, and left again. He returned, and we left the school unnoticed. This occurred eighteen years ago, and notwithstanding we can look back at the occurrence now with an unprejudiced eye, we are unable to see that we did wrong. *The day has gone by for school teachers to flog and scarify the backs of their pupils.* The parent who would submit to it, is a coward and a dastard, and unworthy to have a son. These are our sentiments; others may think as they choose.

WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT?

What effect will the return of peace to Europe have upon the people of the United States? Though we may not to the eyes of a dogseat of war we have felt its influence. It has kept our citizens in a state of continual excitement and commotion; it has caused the most fluctuations and depression in our trade; it has raised and kept up the price of food, and there can be have been built in every section of the country. Peace may bring a removal of these evils,—expose to our people, steadiness to our markets, and a reduction in the price of the necessaries of life. The war has not been carried on so long as to turn our commerce into other channels or to open new markets, which might be closed by the return of peace. Its termination, therefore, cannot have any effect upon the United States except through the money market, and possibly through the market for breadstuffs. Peace generally brings a reduction in the price of food, and the farmers of this country are in such comfortable circumstances that they will not grumble at the result. It will bring a larger amount of money into circulation, thus encouraging speculation. Speculation in stocks, real estate, railroads, &c., is the evil most to be feared during the ensuing year.

AN EXPLANATION WANTED.

Although the public sometimes laughs at the childish observations of the sage of Brooklyn Heights, yet it must acknowledge that he is one of its greatest benefactors. The information which is imparted to the people by his brief, comprehensive letters, is useful and highly valuable. Ever envy one who reads the Maine Journal or Market Report of our daily papers, but no one who reads M. Marsh's observations on the weather. To him we are indebted for the information that the temperature during the past month (March) did not rise as high as during any previous March for the last sixteen years. It did not rise above 47 degrees. The fact is simply, but who can estimate its importance? What will be the effect upon the earth of this low temperature during April? Shall we have a summer like that of 1843, when the temperature during March did not rise above 48 degrees? Will this low temperature be followed by an abundant crop, or by a dry summer, a failure, high prices, and a dearth? Mortimer gives us the facts; who will explain them and predict the consequences of the low temperature of the present Spring?

"AN ACT to Amend an Act :" To pick a man up, when you have knocked him down.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A YOUNG Englishman, named Cornelius C. MCALISTE, recently committed suicide in this city, on account of a disappointment in love. He left a letter addressed to the coroner, in which he stated very coolly his reasons for the suicide, and his firm conviction that he had a perfect right to commit the act.

A MR. GREATOREX, of Herkimer county, N. Y., was recently attacked by an infuriated bull, pursued some distance, and pitched over a fence into a ditch. He very happily says a severe lecture on his head, which struck a rock that protruded from the side of the ditch.

BARNUM, in a letter to the Providence Journal, says : "I loved to make money, but not better than I loved to spend it. I gave "10,000 per annum in charity for the last ten years, and, if I had not been a public, imprudent and confiding, I should not have been ruined."

THE Collins steamship ARCTIC, which was recently launched by George Steers, her builder, is the largest vessel afloat. Steers, it will be remembered, was the builder of the famous pilot schooner, which beat all the boats of the Royal Yacht Club in 1852.

GENERAL WOOD, has written a letter from Oregon, in which he pitches into the civilians of that territory, accusing them of every possible villainy with the friendly Indians, and barbarously murdering their savage wives with which to make peace.

DR. ROBERT M. GRAHAM, of New Orleans, who was sent to the State's Prison a year ago, for killing Col. Loring at the St. Nicholas hotel in this city, has been pardoned by Gov. Clark.

A LOUISIANA paper states that a canoe containing a negro man and his family got into a swamp, and that one of the negroes was swallowed by an alligator.

A FEW days since, a boy named Healy, aged thirteen years, while attempting to dip a pail of water from the river Lee, at Albany, fell headfirst into the barrel, and was drowned.

THE Cleopatra, who were sailing near a large mush tub in a lager beer brewery, fell into the tub which was full of hot beer, and were scalded to death.

A FEW little boy, eight years of age, while at play in the street, it is only as an idle pastime, set burn to place by a bloodhound, owned by a neighbor of the child's father.

THE combined daily circulation of the New York Press is more than one-third greater than that of the Press of any other city on the globe.

M. DUBOIS, the physician to the Empress Eugenie, received *one hundred thousand dollars* as a fee for attending her during her late confinement.

THE expense of one trip of an ocean steamship is over forty thousand dollars.

WIT AND HUMOR.

To look at the ladies' bonnets, you would imagine that the March winds had blown them all off, but it is no such thing. It is only a new style, generally in their council, give themselves. They fly off at the head, and, as we have suffered from it ever since they in their generation, that not all the blowing upon in the world would be able to give them a different turn.

A NEAPOLITAN nobleman fought fourteen duels a month that there was a greater poet than Ariosto. At his death-bed, a confessor, who was a great admirer of Ariosto, desired him to acknowledge the superiority of that poet. "Father," answered the dying man, "to tell the truth, I never read either Dante or Ariosto."

A LEGISLATOR in a Western State has introduced a bill providing that any man flogging with a cat-o'-nine-tails of men who abuse their wives : "for," said he, "there is no more than half a sensible dog of a husband should have to settle with the cat.

A SURE, of which the following is a very illustrative example, was recently cut to the sight of a dog-gist in the neighborhood of Barnsley : "Our,—I have a bad cough, and will be still in my Bow Wills and Her cast my Happy Tight."

ISN'T it singular that mineral waters are only known to be good for what is all our ancestors never knew a physician to advise a poor man to go to Saratoga, Avon, or any other watering place.

MR. FRESHMAN says there is no country in the world where wives are more worshiped than they are in America. He ought to say, however, that all the adoration comes from somebody else's husband.

A LADY's dress is becoming wonderfully simple in its construction, owing to the scarcity of material, which taking it off her head again are done now by one and the same movement.

If you are a very precise man, and wish to be certain of what you get, never marry a girl named Ann, for you will be sure to get a Mary Ann, generally given and others, that "Ann is an indefinite article."

A WESTERN jury, holding an inquest over a man who died in prison, returned the following verdict : "The way of the transgressor is hard, and he came to his death from natural causes."

THE Russian Bear began the late war by attacking the Turkey, and the wish of Turkey, and now it is begging for a peace.

WHY does a bombshell always cost so much more than a cannon ball? Because it generally goes where a bombard is always sold.

CAN IT BE SO?

The theory that our winters have increased in length and severity during the last eight or ten years is generally supported by scientific men. The Northmen who discovered Greenland in the year 983 gave it the name on account of the rich verdure which clothed its mountains and its valleys. Formerly, it was customary to cut trees measuring a foot in diameter; now, it is rare to see a bush exceeding a man's height, or thicker than the wrist. Formerly vessels were constructed with mighty forests; now only stunted grass can bear the cold of its winters. The roving Northmen who visited the shores of this continent as early as the tenth century were charmed with the mild, genial air, the rich vegetation, especially with the luxuriant vines of New England. They called the country, even including the sea-border of Maine, Vinland or the land of vines. It is therefore probable that, eight centuries ago, the climate of New York was as mild as that of Central and Northern Italy at the present date, where oranges grow in the gardens at Christmas, and the air is mild and balmy during the greater part of the winter.

THINK NOT, SWEET ONE.

BY STELLY JOHNSON.

Think not, sweet one, that the happy birds
Will quest in the air forever,
Or the flowers bright will have no theats
Their beautiful buds to sever;
For the fairest roses earliest fade
While the summer winds are sighing,
And the sweetest birds are oft laid low
Which high in mid air are flying.

Think not as you gaze on yonder moon
That no shadow shall come before it,
Or because the lake is sweet and calm
That safe you may venture o'er it;
For the moon so bright shall shortly wane,
Or a shadowy cloud shall hide it,
And the lake be lash'd to such fiery foam
That no vessel could safely ride it.

Think not, my love, that the syren hope
Sings ever a truthful story,
Or that when the evening spreads her wings,
No dawn shall obscure her glory;
For the brightest eye gives birth to dawn,
As we gaze with joy and wonder,
And as sweet hopes on her eye alight
A hand mays the clouds asunder.

NORMA DANTON;

OR THE

ORPHAN OF THE LIGHTHOUSE

A TALE OF FRAUD AND REVENGE.

CHAPTER XX.—CONTINUED.

"There was no awful silence, and I saw all faces growing dark around me; for many had come in, drawn there, doubtless, by my frantic appeal. The young bride fainted in her husband's arms, and was borne to an inner room. Paul approached me, and heard more words between the clenched teeth which I could not hear, and stay my curses. Maddened past all endurance, I heard an imprecation upon his head—for there, on my kneeling knees, with our child smiling up in my face from the carpet where I laid it down—that curdled the blood of those who heard it fall from my writhing lips. The guests were filled with horror, and Paul Dodder's face grew livid with rage and hatred, as he ordered the servant to turn me from the house.

"Keep back your arsenals,' I said, coldly, as I mastered the child in my arms; and, looking down on the awe-stricken lacquays, from my fair height, till they dared not lay a finger on me, I said to him, in tones of writhing disdain, pointing to the child: 'I hait everything of you except the drops of your blood in her veins, and those I love, and shall ever love, because they are hers. I am as far above your contempt as you are below hers. You slowly extending my way down stairs, I quitted the house.

"In the reaction, the violence of my anguish knew no bounds. I was scarcely as a mad woman, and conveyed by some humane hand to a charitable institution for the sick, and works of blank blackness passed unheeded by me. But days of restoration came at intervals, with pangs that sent me shrieking back to the dark shores of madness. I thought there was a glad morn, somewhere, but had no strength to guess what it was. One day, as in a dream, the sweet, soft image of my delicate child floated within the waste of recollection.

"'Is my child I say child? I cried: 'bring me my child.' They told me she had died two months before. I was alone. I was bereft of the only thing left me on earth—love.

"It was better. She has escaped a miserable world, in which she could only have had her mother's shame for her dower.

"I was pronounced free from the danger of relapse, and sent kindly on my way; but the threads of my life were tangled and confused and my powers shatt ered. For two years, I have not known a well hour; but I've paid my last farthing on the river of shame. Let the weather-beaten, storm-tossed craft float out to eternity's ocean."

A few hours later, it was said by the anxious watchers around poor Dodder's bed, "He is sinking rapidly." The fatal cough had ceased entirely, and that was a sure symptom of approaching dissolution.

All through the next day, the flesh wrestled with the spirit. Towards evening she helped extend a little, and asked that a man of God might be called, to speak some comforting words to her fainting, failing soul.

"Whom shall I call?" asked Mrs. Jones.

"It is immaterial; any good man," the dying girl replied with difficulty."

Strange are the attractions of destiny; strange are the mysterious ways of that divine somethings, which the Christian calls God's decree, the Heathen, Fate.

It was a soft, rich, mellow, autumn twilight, and the first, faint stars darted their radiance through the low, unscreened window. The deathlonely-silent features of the sick girl, sharpened by disease, stood out, white and glistening, through the gathering gloom. The dews of death were settling amid her thin locks, and her eye wore a varying light. She beat its brilliant flashes enquiringly on the clergyman bending his head as he entered the low portal, and with a sudden start, exclaimed:

"Almighty Providence! it is he!"

An ashen hue overshadowed the face of the Divine, as he looked on the dying girl. She feebly put out her hand, and said:

"It is you, then; all is past now. I am going to that long home for which you first taught me to prepare, Sir."

"Speak low—for the love of Heaven!" said the pastor, as he beat its ear close to her lips, to catch the words but too distinctly uttered for the peace of his agitated soul. And there the victim lay gasping in her death pangs beneath his stifling presence. He who had moulded so her pliant youth, that she knew not evil from good—he who had led her to the light but to thrust her back again to outer darkness. Verily, how will he answer to the Judge for that lost lamb.

Mrs. Jones brought the first clergyman she found, to administer to the spiritual wants of the dying; and through the ministerial changes always mourning, the Rev. Mr. Stillworth had received a call, and was settled in the populous city where poor Tollet was toiling out her last breath in indigence. It was quite natural that she was not aware of his location, as she did was breaking his fast sneaked on the grounds of his Uncle James.

The steam of the richly flavored coffee appended powerfully to his senses. The agreeable repast over, he bade his entertainer adieu, and quitting the garden, gained the high road, intending to return to the city by a different route from that by which he came. All along the road lay the paradisaical homes of that Eden of luxury, and at short distances from each other the tree-crowned hills stood reverently beautiful. He roved to catch fuller views of the near townships, and here and there stole glimpses of the far, dark sea, while close at hand stretched, up and down, and to and by, the veins of iron which bore the fiery heart, beating and leaping in its headong way and rolling on with its power, interest and impulse of untold wealth, hope, misery and bruin, consoling in devices to get gold and make the land again teem where nature had been prodigal. Down again from the hill top, wandering back for the valley seeds then.

Uncle Lesbmas and her mother were taking a drive that morning in a low con-hose chaise. The vehicle was constructed with direct reference to the comfort of the invalid, who was too timid to ride with any other driver than her husband or daughter. Tempted by the beauty of the day, they had gone further than usual, and were now on their homeward way, moving at a quick rate, for the invalid complained of sudden faintness. They were approaching a slope in the road, and at the foot of the hill was one of those numerous railroad crossings, with the warning signal high above it.—Look out for the engine while the bell rings.' They were fast nearing the spot, and the bell sounded this way and that to see if a train were coming. Yes, clear as hand—there was no train could see for the head in the road was sudden on either side. She thought she had made sure of a safe distance, when the smoke and noise of the great spouting engine should pass, for it must be very near. She felt her mother leaning against her, and glancing at the beloved face discovered she had fainted. In the moment of fear and anxiety her grasp of the reins slackened, the horse took a sudden start, and dragged them from her hand beyond the hope of recovery. They were gone, and the affrighted animal was dashing into the very jaws of destruction.

Angel of God! they will be borne on to the track and trampled to death by that great fire fabric before her, was conscious that some one on the other side of the track was pressing forward with more than human speed to save, or to attempt to save them. She had grasped in vain to recover the reins and control the unruly animal, with the faint hope of turning him from the imminent danger; but it seemed too late. She closed her eyes for the last time, with her fainting mother clasped in her arms, when she felt a great shock as if the strength of twenty men had thrust the furious horse back from his mad career. There was a fearful struggle, and senseless beneath the strong arms that held him, while the screaming horror passed them by with one wild spin: the guard on her engineer's face in speechless wonder, at the daring pesth his hand raised to rescue them from a death so terrible.

It was William Danton who had thus risked his life in order to procure the two helpless women from a result terrible to think of.

"Pray, sir," said Uncle, "take a seat in the carriage and drive us to some place where I may procure assistance for my mother, for I am weak and helpless, from the fright that possessed me."

Quietly he did as she requested. Mrs. Lesbmas' timely faint had been her preservation from the knowledge of any near danger, else she might have died with terror. She now began to unravel to know that they had passed through that which could not be spoken of without a suffocating heart, and quickly learned from the lips of her son's rescuer who he was and her indebtedness to him.

"There are no words that I am capable of uttering," said Mr. Lesbmas when, holding his rescued treasures once more in his arms, he listened to the story of their fearful danger from the lips of his son—no words, no help in which to express to you, young man, my gratitude."

"Oh! do not speak of it," said the young man. I did but what every manly sentiment of my soul compelled me to do. Not to me, sir, but to God be the thanks,' he said solemnly; 'I was but the instrument."

"True, true, most true," said the happy father; "but that thought will ever make you dear and precious to us. Unfold to me your hopes—your aims in life; call on me as on a friend, for God has given me the power to help, and but for you I should be now childless and broken-hearted—all that I love, snatched from me in the fell moment, had not the Great Ruler appointed you the guardian of my only treasure, my wife, my child."

Such sympathy could excel in every eye as thus the father spoke, as he clasped his loved ones again to his heart.

Little by little Mr. Lesbman drew from Willam Danton the simple history of his life, and he rejoiced that it had fallen in his way to be nobly acquainted with the son of his old college companion, for now he knew his name he could search with facility for traces of that well-remembered face.

William had never experienced so much real pleasure as in those few days, during which the greater part of his time was passed with the Lesbmas. Ursula charmed him with her sweet songs, while to her father he was ever welcome; for he enjoyed the fresh, honest mind of the young sailor, as frank and independent; and they all grieved with him for the loss of his lovely sister, and he was dear as a brother and son to the merchant's happy family; for an acquaintance with such a beginning as theirs quickly ripens into intimacy.

He had thought to leave his native shore on this second voyage without one friendly voice to say, "God speed." Not so, for Ursula and her father came down to visit him on board his ship the day he sailed; and many delightful scenes to love when far away, their lives were, as they were snuggled, without his knowledge, into his state room, by the fair pirate Ursula, aided doubtless by the Captain and her father in her mischievous designs.

Her bright hazel eyes filled with tears when she said good by, and her father swung the young man's hand with a grip of cordial love.

Promises to write were already exchanged, and they were faithfully kept.

On the stormy sea again. The wild winds howled through the rigging, but the thought of Ursula's smile tempered the storm and softened the wind to his touch. He boasted the sea while an offering large was flung at the helm.

Meanwhile James Danton set the wily snare, secure from observation, in which he would entrap the unsuspecting merchant. Mr. Lesbman was deeply tainted with the prevailing mania for speculation, so rife amongst business men even of the highest character and confidential worth. Great capitalists were speculating vast amounts, hoping railroad stocks and the excitement on change was almost incredible. The successful wire pulling of the few knowing ones to further their own interests and effect the downfall of the unwary, was carried to an extent almost unprecedented in the business mart.

There must be victims where the undermiuers are skilful and possessed of unbounded wealth, and the sager with the spy of information to ruin one who could not be reached by other means than such as might be achieved by the cunning himself devised, and the agent unable prepense and a plan of revenge cherished for years in the revengeful heart of James Danton.

Mr. Leshman thought he saw a chance for a fair investment in a railroad stock then in the market, which, in a commercial point of view, seemed to have overlooked. Inquiry, instigated by parties secretly appointed to report progress, influenced the merchant to purchase extensively, and a few figure an immense amount to parties with whom he was trading, at a date not far distant. Before the consummation of the bargain he had spent employed in the the transaction was overreached. Some other capitalists had stepped in and bought all of the stock at a low figure, amongst which he had agreed to deliver at a much lower price than on the date of his agreement the stock stood at nicety.

It seemed like a chance, but was in effect a great stroke of public villany brought to a successful issue by the cunning scheme of bitter enmity. The merchant must deliver according to agreement the amount promised, or make up to the parties for the rise on the stock. It swept him clean of the wealth he had spent a life time in amassing, and in the wreck of his fortunes many were involved. As the intelligence flew from man to man of the involvement of the first house of Lesbmas & Co. the panic spread with it. It must dread of impending consequences to many a modest trader, who had piled his little treasure of wealth beneath the shelter of those gold dropping caves.

The overthrow of Mr. Lesbman's business reputation was terrible and complete. It paralyzed his faculties, and in a fit of insanity he left his home, and was found dead in a common suicide. With his own hand he closed the ledger of life, unable to gaze longer on the fearful record of his own misfortunes. He left the account unsettled, preferring, in mad trust-to be weighed in the just balance of the infinite, leaving his memory to the mercy of his fellow men.

Write on his stone, "He kept the golden rule."

The creditors generally desired to make a reservation of interest in favor of the widow and daughter of the unfortunate man, but were inexorably declined.

The tender, delicate Ursula and her mother had come to drink the first of the many-fountained bitterness of life; not from a golden chalice, for the guard grew beside the cup and dusty thoroughfare where their toiling feet must tread clad in the weaving sandals of poverty. The gravel shall hereafter be the clothing cup whence the patient lips must drain the sickening drops. She who disported with so liberal a hand in the floral dances in the rich halls of toil, must now glean for herself, and be content to eat of the trampled herb which the careless steps of those who wander in pleasure have crushed, unnoticed, in their gleeful march. And for the chapter of its changes, as we turn the rustling leaves of time,

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

NEW HAVEN, APRIL 10, 1855.

MR. LEDGER:—I am keeping company with a young man who is of irreproachable character, but my mother has taken a great dislike to him, and says I shan't marry him, and father says he don't care anything about it, but we are agreeing, and that mother will agree to. Now, ought I to give him up? I would rather not, but better do so than secure as possible, and much oblige

A PERSEVERER.

Filial affection and obedience are among the most charming traits of character, and it is possible for a young lady to exhibit, and we would advise our fair young correspondent to practice them in her present perplexity. She may depend upon it, that that will be the surest road to the attainment of her wishes, and the most certain means of securing future happiness. She and her lover can undoubtedly afford to respect her mother's prejudices, which they can the soonest cure by such exhibitions of delicacy and kindness as we have above hinted at.

TOLLET APPEALING TO PAUL DODDER'S AFFIANCED NOT TO ROB HER OF HER LOVER.

A LOVE SONG FOR THE SEASON.

BY R. HOVLAND BROWN.

Good night, good night, my little one,
But come not now to the door.
For since with the day you'd away the night on,
The winds have blown cold on the moor.
So cold that the stars seem to shiver,
For up in the clear blue sky;
And frozen so hard is the river,
That song when it hurried by.
So, come not now to the door, pretty one.
Though Love may the heart keep warm;
For cold the winds blow through the drifting snow,
And no chilling in Winter's arm!

Good night, good night, my little one,
But come not now to the door,
But pray for the day when the glorious Sun
Will shine on the flowers once more.
For the sweet, bright time, Love's fairy time,
When flowers scent the breath of June,
And streams sing sweeter songs than my rhyme
To the stars and silvery moon.
Oh! then, will we sit by the door, pretty one,
Neath roses of crimson and white,
When the bells of Love's time, O, weary day are done,
And sing with the birds, "Good night."

THE GIPSEY'S PROPHECY.

A TALE OF VENICE.

BY DELL SHANNON.

The clouds had rolled away, and the clear light of an Italian moon shone brightly on the broad sweep of the Lagoon, as straggling seen between dome and tower, or resting in calm repose on the massive marble palaces, as a young man attired in the plain black worn by the patrician order in Venice, descended the steps of the Zavalli Palace, and gliding towards the pier, drew the plumed cap farther upon his glossy curls, beneath which flashed eyes in keeping with the indefinite resolve that curved his haughty, determined lips;—yet, despite the unmistakable impress of his stern features, Antonio Zavalli was eminently handsome. Seeing his friend, Pietro Pisano approach, his dark visage became suddenly lighted up with all the fire of intelligence, and witchery of smile, that alone was wanting to complete his manly beauty; and pushing aside the shading plume that had darkened his contracted brow, the noble bent of an intellectual forehead, and erectile compressed lips, were a relaxed and winning grace, as he saluted him with "Ha, Pietro! well and fortune be long returned. How have you employed yourself the while, Sir Troubadour?"

"Gallantry and love, as usual."

"What new divinity now, Pietro?"

"If you come to-night to the Moretti Palace, you shall see and judge for yourself."

And they separated; Antonio shaping his course by the circuitous labyrinth that terminated in the Pallazzo, while Pietro, calling to a gondolier, was conveyed to another part of the City of the Sea.

That night, the balconies of the Moretti Palace presented to the passers in the various gondolas a brilliant spectacle. The tall windows were radiant with the blaze of chandeliers, seen through silken draperies festooned with rarest flowers, giving to their gaze the groups of high-born dames and gallant cavaliers, where the hum of conversation and lively peals of laughter of the plumed and jewelled occupants of the balcony, resounded with the ballroom strains, echoed by the "light fantastic" feet of the dancers.

Early in the evening, the steel prow of a gondola grated upon the marble steps leading to the water-gate of the palace, from which Pietro Pisano leaping out, so stationed himself within the gate as to be able to see all who might enter, while he carefully adjusted his own drooping plume, so as effectually to conceal his features; nor did he alter his immovable position, while crowds of masqueraders continually passed to the scene of festivity, until, starting as if with an electric shock, he sprang forward to meet two ladies who, veiled, and assisted from their gondola by Antonio Zavalli, were ascending the water flight of steps leading to the entrance gate, where he had waited. During forward, he whispered, "Guilla!" to which "Pietro!" was responded in soft, musical accents, as he raised the dark plume that had before shaded his features. Placing her arm within his, they rapidly traversed the marble pavement, then up the noble flight of steps, and traversing the magnificently-lighted hall, the young lady pushed aside the silken curtain of a folding door at its extremity, and disappeared. Meantime, Antonio Zavalli conducted the magnificent Lady Villiers, the English saint of the fair Guilla Monti, to the hall leading to the masquers' robing room above, where he waited until the door's rich hangings were again pushed aside, and the two radiantly beautiful women, now divested of their veils, and sparkling with jewels, appeared; when, to his surprise, Pietro Pisano sprang forward from behind an enormous Etruscan vase, (the favorite pedestal of which he had been minutely scrutinizing,) and again tendering his arm to Guilla, advanced with her towards the balcony; while Antonio, with a brow dark as ebon, conducted Lady Villiers, who slowly followed; so that to augment his rage, when the door of a stranger's light flooded round them, and music, dancing, and the hum of voices met their entrance, and ther Guilla, nor her cavalier Pietro, was to be seen.

"Diavolo!" muttered Antonio, fiercely, between his clenched teeth. "Pietro Pisano the favored suitor of Guilla Monti. Never!" and his brow darkened, and the curve of his patrician lip grew more relentless in its outline, as he added: "She is mine—my affianced one; and I will claim her in spite of every obstacle raised by earth or heaven!"

Then making a violent effort to appear tranquil, he joined Lady Villiers in her marshal satire, in the brilliant masquerade, where splendid Venetian mirrors gave back the festive scene, where shone the beauty and nobility of the City of the Sea.

Complaining of the heat, Lady Villiers seated herself on an ottoman by a window opening on a balcony; and there, standing at her side, looking out on the placid waters below, stood Pietro and Guilla—her flushed cheek and pleased smile assuring him that the confession he theme was not displeasing; and as the vibrations of her fan swept back the raven curls, giving to Antonio occasional glimpses of the lovelit glance raised to another's face, albeit his own lip smiled, yet did the contracted brow and flushed eye too plainly denote the fierce volcanic fires that burned within. Finding the effect to shake off his monitions unsuccessful, he strode away, and mingling among the masked throng, was accosted by a gipsey, who offered to tell his fortune. Looking at the lines of his hand, she said:

"The task to tell your destiny is easy; you will find it more difficult to guard against its dangers. The ways of love and politics are intricate, and slippery the steps of the Zavalli Palace, while the Lagoon is deep."

"How! does your art foretell that I will be drowned?" But the gipsey had disappeared, and after a walk unseen, Antonio returned to the ball-room, where stationing himself by Lady Villiers, he asked Guilla's hand for the next dance; and as he led her forth, his handsome face assumed its brightest smile, as he spoke in the low and winning tone none other had ever resisted. But though he smiled mechanically, by her eye wandered to where Pietro stood, and noting this, Antonio became equally silent and abstracted. Handing her back to her seat, he caressed himself on the plea of the heat, and passing out upon a balcony, was seen no more during the evening.

When the maskers began to disguise at the sound of the distant Convention bell, and Pietro, having escorted Guilla and Lady Villiers to their gondola, was about to seek his own, he was startled by his name being rudely pronounced, and looking round, saw Antonio Zavalli by his side.

"I would speak a word with you, Pietro."

"A dozen, if you please, *Amico Mio*. Here have I been using all my eloquence in your behalf with the handsome widow, and was about to disappear so suddenly. Her simple jealousy will save you from further pleading for culprit upon the Lews of the Ridito, whose sentence has already helped you to anticipate considerably, or regret says wrong, from your expected inheritance."

"I beg that you find some other topic for your amusement, than my attentions to an old painted dowager."

"Right gladly I'll change the subject, if you'll find me another one. Pietro, calling to the English parcisa, come to Italy on the invitation of her brother-in-law, the Marquis Monti, to chaperon her niece, his daughter. Of course Lady Villiers hath yet time sufficient, wherein to consult her own inclinations, and the interest of whoever is fortunate enough to 'win and wear' her."

"By Heavens! Antonio, but this is too much. What is Lady Villiers to me, who am, to all intents and purposes, the affianced husband of Guilla Monti? Why, you plumed and jewelled accepants of the baloony, resounded with the ballroom strains, echoed by the "light fantastic" feet of the dancers.

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APRIL VOICES.

BY WILLIE R. PARDE.

I.

It was the voice of a fountain fair
Borne on the wings of the mountain air;
And this was the sense of the liquid lay
Borne to my ears at the dawn of day:
"A little bird with a bright red breast,
In gathering things to build a nest;
And one—no guy in a coat of blue,
Sits singing the song, the young hears through."

II.

It was the voice of the rifted cloud
Hardly unfolding its blue leaves yet;
And this was the sense of the floral lay
Borne to my ears at the close of day:—
"I heard when the steps of Spring came nigh,
I heard her lull of the bright blue sky;
And came to see if the earth looked fair
And like song of birds upon the air."

III.

It was the voice of a streamlet free
Chanting its motion right merrily.
And this was the sense of the rippling lay
Borne to my ears at the close of day:
"My fetters are loosed, I'm free once more
To kiss the sand on the sloping shore;
To dance along in my merry glee
And hail the sun as I seek the sea."

IV.

Wherever I went, go far or near
Musical voices met on my way;
And this was the sense of each rounded lay
Borne to my ears through the hours of day:
"It's as a bride at th' altar appears,
April is here with her smiles and tears;
With her sweet sun, with smile from fragrant bowers
With her budding trees and blooming flowers."
HAMLIN, N. Y., April, 1866.

NELLIE LONG;

OR

THE RUNAWAY.

BY TULA.

CHAPTER I.

"Patience and sorrow strove
Who should express her goodliest."
KING LEAR.

YOU, Nellie was a hunchback. A poor, deformed girl. Nature had apparently singled her out for misfortunes. Does it not seem that there are those who have sufferings and sorrows appointed to them beyond the common lot of mortals? Nellie was not only a cripple, but she had also to contend against poverty and want; but there was a gem in the poor, misshapen casket, a beautiful soul imprisoned in the miserable clay.

Nellie was the only child of a widow in humble circumstances, who supported herself and daughter by going out to work by the day. Nellie was fourteen years old, but so short in stature that she might be taken for eleven or twelve, but for the old, wise looking face, which seemed like that of a person much older. There was nothing youthful about Nellie, except her eyes. They were glorious looking orbs, large, dark, from which a soul, a pure, free soul, not crippled, but unfettered with sore talents, looked forth.

Nellie had manifested an ardent thirst for knowledge ever since she was very young. Unable to enjoy the active sports, so natural to childhood, she applied herself to books, with an energy uncommon in a young person. She had attended a public school as steadily as her poor health would allow, and by her gentle docility, and readiness to assist in their lessons, even the indolent and unstudious of the scholars, she had won quite a kindness and affection, and their tasks were indeed to recompense her, in the only way that she wished reward, by lending her books.

In the long weary evenings, when they could afford a light, Nellie wondered in the delicious pages of Robinson Crusoe, and was bewildered with the enchanting tales of the Arabian Nights, and went with Gulliver upon his wonderful travels.

Can there ever be books published that will equal these? Will the matter-of-fact stories written by excessively sensible people (at the present day) who digest the whole fairy and ghost tales, which have not only historical and matter-of-fact books are fit for the generation mind, will these give as much pleasure to the little ones at home of the present generation as the time-honored tales?

Must the imagination, that invests so many objects with such beauty and wonder, and clothes with peculiar interest, be restrained? Shall there be no fairies in buttercups, no wonderful pigeons in cowslips, who dine on mountain tables, and drink from lily bells? No haunted dells, no Undines in the waterfalls? Must Young Lochinvar be matter of fact, and read only the strictly true in this utilitarian age? Must they consider only, in looking at a waterfall, how much it would be valued as a water-turn, and at the meadows, with reference to how much they would be worth to the square acre, when covered with towns and villages?

Let us hope not, else what would become of our embryo poets, and future romancers?

Nellie studied too hard; the little wax face became paler, the thin hands more transparent. She was pronounced very frail. She was too weak to go out, and was missed in her accustomed place at school.

Mrs. Long, Nellie's mother, felt that she must consult a physician, though she hardly ventured to incur the expense.

"She has a low nervous fever," he said, when he came, and had noted with professional accuracy all her symptoms. "Rest and quiet, he thought, would restore her."

She had both. Rather more of the latter, than she wished, for necessity compelled Mrs. Long to leave her sick daughter, subject only to the occasional looking in of a kind neighbor, while she went out to her days' work.

"Mamma," said little Amy Lee, as she tripped into her invalid mother's room, "I am so sorry."

"Sorry for what, Amy?"

"Poor Mrs. Long, Mamma. I went down into the kitchen, and there saw Mrs. Long rubbing away on the washboard, and the tears were rolling off from her cheeks, while she washed. I asked her what the matter was, and she said she was thinking of her daughter Nellie, who was sick, and whom she was obliged to leave alone, and when I asked her why she didn't stay at home, and take care of her, she said she had to work, and that we would starve, unless she went out to work as usual; and she says Nellie reads a great deal, and that she is the best scholar in school, and that she is crippled, and can't run as I can, and oh! mamma, I'm so sorry for Nellie, and won't you let me go in the morning, and carry her something nice, to-morrow?"

Mrs. Lee promised; and when Mrs. Long came for the price of her day's work, she made inquiries into her circumstances, and said she would render her needed assistance.

Amy went the next day to see Nellie, accompanied by a servant, with a large basket, which contained such delicacies for the invalid, and sons groceries for Mrs. Long.

Nellie, as usual, was alone, half dozing, when the door softly opened, and her quick ear caught the rustling of silken drapery. Was it a fairy that she saw before her? or the beautiful incarnation of some of the rainbow creations of the Persian story teller?

Nellie rubbed her eyes. The beautiful vision did not leave her long in doubt.

"Poor Nellie! Your mamma, who works for us, told me all about you, and I have come to see how you are, and to bring you a little nice food. Poor girl! how pale you look," and the little white hand smoothed back caressingly, the tangled locks from Nellie's flushed face.

What a contrast in the children! The child of affluence, sweet, with an unconscious elegance in her bearing, and a face beautiful as an angel's, and the child of suffering and poverty, crippled, pale, and with a patient expression, which told of sorrows borne, and difficulties and troubles struggled with.

Amy's visit was given a new impulse to Nellie. She gradually grew stronger and better, and Amy, who seemed to look upon Nellie as a sort of protégé, did not confine her kindness to one visit. She sent her some suitable clothing, and lent her many interesting books of her own.

CHAPTER II.

Several years passed away; years, which brought the development of the loveliness of womanhood; years, which brought no added grace or beauty, to the poor hunchback. Yet she had not been idle during this time. She had read and studied, with the avidity of a starving intellect.

She was young one day to a public library, where, through the efforts of a friendly person, she had been permitted to take books. A wretched looking dwarf crossing she saw, wrapped in a faded shawl, and with a bonnet sent, but old fashioned.

It struck her how the various schools were cut; the boys freed from confinement, were full of spirits and mischief.

"Here! There goes old humpy," said one of a group of rude children, as Nellie passed slowly along. "I wonder if she would'nt be a good mark to throw a stone at," said another, as he aimed a small stone at her, without, however, meaning to hit her, as he afterwards affirmed.

It struck her how loud were the temple, and she felt sensitive to the ground.

"Poor girl!" said a young man, compassionately, who was passing, and saw her fall. "I fear it has killed her. No! she is opening her eyes. Come here," and he beckoned to a hackney coach, passing, "I will take her to her home," and he lifted her in carefully.

"Can you tell me your name, and where you live, little girl? and I will have you taken home?" he said, as she was about to speak.

"Nellie Long, and I live in Cherry street, sir," she replied, as soon as she could speak.

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"I forget them," the person whose manner and voice had won her confidence, and a momentary glow came to her pale cheek, and a new light sparkled in her eyes, "that I am an object to laugh and scoff at. It is possible for even a poor cripple to have an appreciative soul," said she, with dignity.

They reached the tenant house, in one room of which Mrs. Long lived. Nellie's preserver followed her up the two pair of stairs, which led to her home; and there he heard from Mrs. Long and Nellie a recital of their story. His sympathies were already excited for the unfortunate cripple, and as he listened to her correct language, and natural eloquence, as watched her speaking eye, he could not but acknowledge that God, in his mysterious providence, though he had denied to her that beauty of form and feature with all of love's daughters covet, had yet in a manner compensated her by the fine mind and talents with which she was endowed.

"Have you ever written?" he inquired of Nellie. "Perhaps you could write stories, and thus earn enough to make yourself more comfortable; and it would be such a pleasure to you, who are deprived of the usual enjoyments of youth. You might win a name to be proud of, perhaps."

Nellie acknowledged that she had written some, but never for publication. After some persuasion, she was induced to allow him to look over some of her essays.

He found that they evinced uncommon talent, and were much better than the ordinary newspaper trash. He promised to endeavor to obtain employment for Nellie, as contributor to a paper, immediately.

James Cameron, who had so nobly assisted Nellie, was a young lawyer, from a highly respectable family, in New York. Heaven had vouchsafed him a fine intellect, and a truly good nature.

There are many kind, affectionate mothers, but few who unite good sense to superior intelligence and tact. Mrs. Cameron possessed this extensive truth. Her sure James Cameron had proved himself not unworthy of such a mother. He had taken for his guiding principle in life the golden rule, and never neglected any opportunity for doing good, which presented itself—hence his kindness to Nellie.

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Nellie was the child and society, of which she was a brilliant ornament, had failed to avail, often to visit Nellie, and sent her many little comforts. Among one of her visitors was a young lady by the side of the poor sufferer, James Cameron called. They met on the common ground of humanity to a suffering fellow-being.

Miss Cameron was rich with all the adornments of wealth, which are as the brilliant setting to the jewel, if one's mental gifts are considered the jewel, the physical beauty, and the intellectual polish that education gives, the setting which makes a moral loveliness, which far exceeded either.

Miss Cameron, who did not know Cameron. Perhaps he called more frequently, since he ascertained that Amy was often at the side of the sufferer. He was young, and very handsome, consequently impossible to separate from a generous action, the thought that his motives should be anything but the prompting motive.

He was not strange, so gifted by nature (as they were) for each other, that they loved. It was the old story over again, which has been told and retold since the world began, and will be, while this globe exists: an intelligent spirit, beaming in such a lovely shrine, was correct at Nellie's sad fate; for she was dying, of a rapid consumption.

Her mother's anguish, when all the adornments of beauty, which are as the brilliant setting to the jewel, were developed in her daughter's character, was terrible beyond description.

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"JOSEPH" informs us that he has recently discovered his inamorata to be fond of another gentleman, on whom she bestows a modicum of her affections. Our correspondent requires our advice and assistance. We gaily do not see how we can aid him. The circumstance he relates is one of the most common occurrence. Perhaps the lady only pretends to be fond of some one else—time will show.

UNEQUAL MARRIAGES.

JACK HAMMERSLEY AND KATE HENDERSON.

"I told you, rather," broke he in, "that I wished to put that feeling to the last test, by linking your fortune with my own forever."

"Very well, I accept that version. I am offered to make me your wife, and in return, I asked you to retract your words—to suffer our relations to continue on their old footing, nor subject me to the necessity of an explanation painful to both of us. For a while you consented, now, you are impatient of your concession, and ask me to resume the subject. He it so—I am not the last time."

Musingbrod's cheeks grew deadly pale, but he never uttered a word. After a secondly pause, she resumed:

"Your affections are less engaged in this case than you think. You would make me your wife just as you would do to anything else that gave a bold defiance to the world, to show a consciousness of your own power, to break down the obstacle, and make the prejudices or opinions of society give way before you. You have energy and self-esteem enough to make this attempt. Your wife—albeit the steward's daughter—the governess! would be received, invited, visited, and the deed is done; and so far as you were concerned, the triumph would be complete. Now, however, turn a little attention to the other side of the picture. Can you requite me for all this courtesy on sufferance—all this mockery of consideration? Where am I to find my friendship—where even discover my duties? You only know one kind of pride, that of station and social eminence. I can tell you there is another, loftier far—the conscious one that no inequality of position can obliterate what I feel and know in myself of superiority to those like ladies, whose favorable notice you would entreat for me. Smile at the vanity of this declaration if you like, sir, but at least I am sincere in the conviction, for I am prouder in the independence of my present dependence than I should be in all the state of Mr. Musingbrod's wife. You can see, therefore, that I could not accept this change as the great elevation you suppose it to be. You would be stooping to raise one who could never premade herself that she was exalted. I am well aware that incapacity for love, or another is the condition of most marriages. The rank of one compensates for the wealth of the other. Here, it is affluence and rank; there, it is beauty and poverty. People treat the question in a good commercial spirit, and balance the profit and loss like tradesmen; but even in this atom our compact would be impossible, since you would endow me with what has no value in my eyes, and I, worse off still, with what I know not how to return."

"If Give me your love, dearest Kate," cried he, supported by that, you will see that I deserve it. Believe me, it is your own proud spirit that exaggerates the difficulties that would avail us in society."

"I should scorn myself if I thought of them," broke she in, haughtily; "and remember, sir, that I use not the words of one who speaks in ignorance. I, too, have seen that great world, on which your affections are so fixed. I have mixed with it, and know it. Notwithstanding all the cant of moralists, I do not believe it to be more hollow or more heartless than other things. Its great meeting ground is not of selfgrowth, for it consists of the slavish adulation offered by those beneath it, the groveling worship of the vivid by the folk, who would have friends, and home, and hearth, to be admitted into the antechambers of the great. They who offer up this incense are, in my eyes, far more despicable than they who accept the assistance. But I would not exact my love with either. Do not smile, sir, as if these high-sounding sentiments; they are the veriest common-places of one who loves common-places, who neither seeks affections with coronets nor friendships in gold couches, but who would still less be of that brick-dust—ante, untrodden, and sea-struck—who worship them !"

"You deem me, then, deficient in the most indispensable of qualities" cried Musingbrod, half indignantly.

"I certainly do not accept your intention of marrying beneath you as the proof of it. Must I again tell you, sir, that, in such cases, it is the gentle, patient, long-suffering woman who pays all the penalty, and that, in the very conflict with the world, the man has his reward?"

"If you have brought up a five-hundred-year-old tree to adorn the park, or a five-hundred-year-old tree to adorn the park, or a five-hundred-year-old tree to adorn the park, or

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

COLUMBUS.

BY MRS. LYDIA H. SIGOURNEY.

A student passed in cloister'd cell,—
The midnight lamp declined,
While visions of a vental sphere
Exempt his ardent mind.

At length, by mighty impulse moved,
Decision sprang from thought;
And strong in eloquence of soul,
The Genoese besought

Of lofty science,—"Send me forth
Or ye yonder trackless sea,
And glorious themes for deathless tome,
I will bring back to thee."

I'll win earth undiscover'd isles,
Such trophies of renown,
That all thy harvests heretofore
Shall be as tinsle-down."

But Science stood with folded arms,
In stained, sceptic pride,
And like the Phantom of old,
Unwarmed it troth denied.

He said to Commerce,—" Give me ships,
And I the cost will pay,
Now mines of gold, and Indian gems
Shall sparkle to the day."

But Commerce launch'd her clumsy hulk
That fear'd to leave the shore,
And sternly bade the dreamer,—brave,
To waste her time no more.

He turn'd to Royalty, and cried
"Deign thou to speed my way,
And realms and nations yet unknown
Shall bow and own thy sway."

But the anointed kings were bent,
In conflicts of an hour,
And chose in petty feuds to spend
Their heaven-entrusted power.

Then to the Church, Columbus knelt.—
"Oh Mother!—bless thy son,—
And send him with a viceroy's right,
Where heathen souls are won.—

And incense from a thousand shrines
Shall on your altars glow,
And clustered praise from pagan tongues
Thy temple-courts o'erflow."

So, the tiara'd Church gave ear
When her true suppliant pray'd,
And Isabella's inspired hand
Its warm oblation made:

And gaily from the coast of Spain
Three noble sails set sail on the main,—
Westward, they steered 'neath stranger-skies
Till to gray Europe's astonished eyes
This brave, New World was born.
HARTFORD, Conn., April, 1856.

THE DIAMOND SPRAY.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

CHAPTER I.

Alas! she had lost little care
For any idea of future bane!
That parting made the world all dim
To her, whitherso'er she saw.
* * * * * * * *
And nonsense gone, or fact or story,
And many a love has had its making—
Since those two parted, at the breaking
Of daylight, whilst there was the snow.

ALICE CAREY.

"Are you ready, Angela?" said Mrs. Bradfort, as she rapped at the door of her daughter's dressing-room. "Your father is growing fidgetty, and I think myself we should be most fashionably late."

"One moment, dear mamma, and I will join you in the drawing-room," said the young girl within, who was eagerly tearing open a billet-doux, just handed her by her dressing-maid, who held a small pearl box in her hand. The words my mother wear back to console the tasty old gentleman, who was strolling to and down the dining-room, and grumbling, in no measured terms, over the folly of women who were never ready, and the dangers of fashion.

"DEAREST ANGELA.—You gave me no answer this morning. Was it because your mother entered? I hoped for a look or smile in spite of her coming. But if you indeed love me—if I may hope to call you mine at some future day—wear the little trifle I send to my mother's party to-night. It is worthy your beauty, but even so poor a gift will serve to show that I may love you. PAUL ROSSITUR."

She pressed the letter to her lips, and said, eagerly :

"The casket, Lucy—the casket."

The girl placed it before her, open, and her eyes fell upon a delicate spray of diamonds of the purest water. With a little cry of delight, she placed it with trembling fingers in her hair, and throwing the hood of her fur cloak over her head, that the new ornament might not rouse her mother's curiosity, glided down the stairs.

The mother glanced approvingly over her tasteful dress; her father grumbled out a muttered hope that she had not hurried herself too much, for which piece of impertinence the petted belle gave him a playful kiss, and entering the carriage, they were driven to the house of Mrs. Rossitur.

Late as it was, there were still many in the cloak-room when they entered, and Angela, impatient to join her lover and see his face bright-en as he saw the tasty sign of acceptance, took but a passing glance at the mirror, and hurried her mother on to the brilliantly-lighted rooms.

The pretty Angela was a belle—a fight-hearted and sensible one, unspoiled by pride or affectation, and it was just strange that she should be surrounded by a crowd of admirers when her respects had been paid to her bosom. But Paul was not among them, and though she heard his gay laugh in the room beyond, she could not see his face.

"Surely he must have heard us announced," she thought to herself, and as the minutes flew by without his making his bow before her, she felt grieved and wounded. Her eyes sparkled, her color rose, and she half determined to be very cool and distant when he did come, to punish him for his neglect. At that moment a gentleman approached her, and said playfully :

"You look serious, Miss Bradfort. Shall I play monk to your nun, or de you still retain enough affection for the world, to bestow this fair hand upon me for a waltz?"

"Oh, I won't be a nun," was her smiling reply. "But I will waltz with pleasure. There is my favorite—the Prima Donna. It is a wonder to me how any one can sit still with such music in their ears," and yielding her slight form to the clasp of her companion, the two went sweeping in easy and graceful circles around the room.

Meanwhile Paul, in the music room, surrounded by a laughing circle, was straining ear and eye in vain, to win some token of her coming. He had not heard the party announced, and growing weary of surprise, at last, he sauntered to the saloon, and looked in upon the dancers. Just then Angela whirled past, her white hand resting on her companion's shoulder, her cheeks flushed, and her blue eyes raised to his with a smile of pleasure. She did not see him there among the crowd, and biting his lip, he followed the couple to the opposite side of the room. They left the circle; they sat down, and Vernet leaned over his fair partner, and fanned her assiduously, while the words he mur-

THE BEAUTIFUL ANGELA.—SEE STORY OF "DIAMOND SPRAY," ON THIS PAGE.

mured in her ear made her smile, and blush, and look most provokingly beautiful. Paul longed to throw him down the stairs, but he restrained his impatience, and approached the seat. Angela looked up as he drew near; a blush and a shy, happy smile were just flitting over her face, as he fixed his eyes earnestly on her drooping curls, when he started back, turned a little pale, and then addressed her with the most chilling courtesy.

What could it mean? Had he won this token of her regard only to smile at her folly, and punish it by his cool civility? Dreadful as the suspicion was, she was forced to credit it, and after the first shock of surprise was over, her woman's pride rose to her aid. She answered his quiet greeting as quietly, smiled enchantingly at Vernet, who gave up his seat to the new-comer, and turned to Paul with an air of quiet, self-possession, as he uttered a few common-places that quite deceived him.

The waltz had again commenced, and she sat with an aching heart, looking upon the flying forms, when Paul said, mechanically :

"May I have the honor?" and took her hand in his without waiting for her reply. She could not withdraw it from the burning grasp; his arm was around her waist, and his breath upon her cheek, and she felt as if she could have died in the dear embrace. Only once did she venture to look up into his face. It was cold and pale, and his dark eyes were fixed upon her, as if he would read her very soul. She shrank from the glance, and murmured feebly :

"The room is whirling; I do not feel quite well. I—I think I will go to my mother."

Without a word he drew her from the saloon, offered his arm, and led her to Mrs. Bradfort, who, frightened at her pallor, hurried her off to the cloak-room, and sent him for the carriage. He folded her cloak around her, and led her down the stairs; he lingered a moment at the carriage window while Mrs. Bradfort was looking for her husband, and grasping her hand, said, hurriedly :

"Angela, I leave the city to-night. To-morrow morning I shall be on my way to Europe. But think of me sometimes. God bless you! Good-bye!"

He raised her hand to his lips; she felt a hot tear fall upon it. But before she could speak he was gone, her parents entered, and the carriage was rolling swiftly towards home.

The petted child clung to her mother in that first deep grief, and though she could not tell the secret, she wept upon her bosom until she was calm, and fell asleep in her arms at last, as she had done when a little child.

A slight accident explained all, the next day. Her maid, in putting her young mistress's open cloak away, saw something glisten in the silken lining, and taking it to Angela, found the diamond spray, which had caught there as she threw the cloak aside, before going into the ball-room.

She had not worn it. Paul fancied himself rejected, when he was only loved too well, and now the ocean was between them, and it was too late to call the wanderer back.

CHAPTER II.

And they have met; the eyes to meet
In the old time, again she sees,
Hears the same voice.
ALICE CAREY.

World all watches maidens keep,
When they sit alone and weep,
For their heart aches, ended so!
IBID.

Two years afterward, Paul Rossitur sat in the coffee-room of his hotel in London, and read the following letter from his mother :

"MY DEAR BOY:—I am so rejoiced to hear you are to sail for home. You must positively be with us the first of next month. Write me when you sail, as I wish to get up a little fete for your return. I shall take care to have all your friends here to meet you, and have already sent my diamonds to be reset. You know you always used to say diamonds became me. And, by the way, don't forget the lace you promised me. I hope you succeeded in smuggling it through. Did you put it in the lining of your hat as I advised? Your father is well, and anxious to see you. He are all your old associates. Vernet, to whom you took such a dislike, has married Miss Glenn, and grace South is live on her plantation. Your quadam lady-love, Miss Beaufort, is still single, but a terrible flirt. She laughs about it herself, and acknowledges with perfect candor that she has no heart. I used to hope she might be my daughter, but have seen my mistake. Your cousin Georgiana will defer her wedding till you come; that is, if you make your appearance at my reasonable time.

"We have plenty of news here, but I mean you shall come and get them yourself. You will bring me a splendid shawl, of course, some of Gourmet's cream paste; that I use is not genuine, I believe. Don't forget the cosmetique, or the lace, or to be here in time for the fete, unless you wish to shock the heart of your affectionate mother.

CLARA ROSSITUR."

He passed a moment over the note, and then going to the desk wrote briefly.

"If no accident happens to delay me, I will be with you at the time you have appointed, my dear mother.

PAUL."

and sent his letter by the steamer of that day. Little more could he say to Angela. Fate had struck, and on the night of the fete he reached his father's home. The parlors were lighted brilliantly, the band in their places in the saloon, the well drilled servants at their posts, waiting the arrival of the expected guests, when he sprang from the carriage, and dashed through the hall and up the stairs to his mother's room. He opened the door, struck down by the apparition of a bronzed and bearded man, a big past him, stood looking on in mute sorrow-ful astonishment, a tall woman arrayed for dressing room, glittering in satin and diamonds, recognized her friend, and the next moment he was clasped to her heart.

"How dark you have grown, and how very becoming that picturesque style of beard and long hair is to you," she exclaimed, as she released him from that long embrace. "Go to your room my son, you will find everything ready for you; when you have made your toilet join me in the rooms below."

She kissed him again, and glided down the stairs. He passed on to his own private apartments.

"Paul, my boy," said a deep voice behind him, and turning, he saw his gray haired father. Paul was yet impulsive and affectionate as a boy, and with a rush of childhood's memories thronging to his soul, he threw his arms around that stately neck, and kissed the high forehead that was furrowed by many a thoughtful line. Then pressing his lips to the cheek of his fair cousin Georgietta he followed his servant to his own room.

A crowd of eager friends flocked around him, when he stood again by his mother's side, warm hands grasped his, and high-pitched voices gave their greeting till he laughingly announced his intention of leaving the country again upon the following day that he might receive another welcome quite as warm on his second return. But though he seemed gay and light at heart, his eye turned often to the door, for Angela was not there.

It was very late when a buzz of admiration heralded a new entrance; glancing towards the door he saw Angela leaning on her father's arm, while her mother followed with her oldest son Lionel. He looked once more upon that perfect face and found it only still more lovely. She had grown taller and more elegantly proportioned, her manner was now stately and reserved, and her smile not quite so joyous and sincere, but the blue eyes were still as bright, the forehead still as smooth and fair, and the real cheek as delicately tinted as when he had first known and loved her.

He answered the greetings of her party with cordial ease, but when she spoke, when those blue eyes were lifted to his face, and the small white hand held in his, he faltered, murmured, and was as confused as a bashful schoolboy. Suddenly he saw among the thick brown curls of that still waved around her face, the diamond spray, and a wild hope thrilled through his heart. Pale and breathless, he clasped her hand closely in his—he smiled a sweet shy smile—and with some passing compliment, moved away.

It was enough! She could not be wholly indifferent to him or she would never have worn the significant token! And with this glad thought he looked again in the crowd, admiring now and then, a glance from her sweet eyes, and longing impatiently for the time to come when the strange mystery should be explained.

Fortune, satisfied with his two years of probation, now favored him. He led Angela down to supper and waved her for his partner in the dance afterward. But when "the Gemman" began he drew her from the saloon, and into the conservatory, now dimly and deserted but fragrant with the odor of a thousand flowers.

They paused before a splendid orange, both feeling, instinctively, that the moment which should decide their future fates, had come. He took her two hands in his, he pressed them fervently to his lips, and said, passionately :

"Angela, two years ago you sent me from my home and friends. Tonight you wear my token, have you forgotten what it means? I told you then how I loved you, but ah it was not half so well as I love you now! Can you love me, do you love me, Angela?"

"It was a mistake," she faltered, "a cruel mistake. I meant to wear the token then, Paul, as I wear it now, but I lost it in the cloak room and only found it after it was too late."

"You loved me then, Angela?" he said, with a look of rapture in his face.

"Thou, and now, and always," was her low reply, and she was clasped closely to a strongly beating heart.

So ends my story. But Paul Rossiter is again making arrangements for a tour through Europe. This time, he will not be alone, but Angela, going from the altar to the train, will begin life's journey by his side upon the open sea. And Mrs. Rossiter who once thought her son "rather thrift" is with all joy at the match, and resume she is to make one of the party on the bridal journey, more especially as she plans herself with the idea of "complying" an unlimited amount of frippery over the frontier.

HELP THE NEEDY.

RAVEN HOUSE, March 27th, 1856.

MR. LEDGER :—In nearly every number of your paper I notice something is said touching the subject of the poor. I like to see this, as far as it goes, yet while you hold out glowing and fetching pictures of poverty and distress in our crowded cities, would it not be well to digest a plan adequate to relieve the many thousands of "destitute poor" which you say there are in New York? Many more which it is reasonable to suppose are in other cities? You say that there are 80,000 destitute poor now in the city of New York. And that there are less of charity of men and women in that city without means and without friends. The first, it is an absolute shame, a disgrace to humanity. Can the philanthropists of that great city suffer such a state of things to exist without making an effort to wipe out the stain.

You say very prize contributions of the Gospel, who are luxuriating in the sunshine of wealth and prosperity. Truth! Would it not be well for some of which would purchase several happy homes for the poor out in "the far west," from speculations in stock-jobbing and directing this dormant energy in enterprises which would result in giving comfortable homes to the miserable thousands? Instruments abound in the Western Territories. Unrolled over thousands of acres of the fairest and richest land my eyes ever beheld; but the traces of civilization was not to be seen upon it. It was a vast wilderness, the natural resources of which, were far richer than any of the settled parts of the Union. Where I reflected on the condition of the poor in our cities; of the energy they could find employment in developing so fine a country; of their susceptibility to arrive to a high degree of intellectual happiness, of the many means that they might occupy in this "Western Wilderness," the resources of which must remain undeveloped for want of magnanimous spirits possessing wealth and influence shall take hold of this class and direct it by some practicable plan to this land require, with means, as I felt disgusted with my race; not on account of the obstacles that were before me because the selfish part of man delayed the day of realization. Send your paper, Mr. Ledger, proposed with sentiments and practical arguments to bring into activity and life the energies that lay many years. Yes, send them out and they will soon have homes and be happy.

I am most respectfully,
A SUBSCRIBER.

Our fine-off correspondent, whose oval in the cause of suffering humanity deserves every commendation, seems to be unaware of the fact that there is more money annually donated in New York for philanthropic purposes, than in any other city of its size in the world. We allude to the Five Points, the Dead and Dumb, and the Insane; hospitals for all classes of the sick; Magdalen Asylums, Sailors Homes, Seamens Refuges, Women's Hospitals, Houses of Industry, and Ladies Home Missions, without number. One society sends out on an average one hundred poor orphan children a month to the West, where homes have been previously provided for them, in respectable families. Beside, that worthy class which our correspondent refers to as "your pious ministers of the Gospel, who are luxuriating in the sunshine of wealth and proclaiming the 'Truth' beneath riches the cost of which would purchase several happy homes" &c.,—these very gentlemen are constantly laboring in the cause of humanity, and their churches will not only their tool but their money to relieve the necessities of the needy. We are all trying to do what we can here, for the relief of our suffering poor. Our efforts, though humble, are earnest and sincere, and we always gladly welcome aid from other sources. If our correspondent will send us a few thousand dollars for the purpose of practically carrying out his admirable suggestions, we will see that the donation is well applied.

A WOMAN'S FRIENDLY HINT.

MR. LANDER :—I have observed several letters in your column, from husbands who complain of their wives going to balls with other gentlemen, and kissing their male relatives with enthusiasm, of their buying a superfluity of dresses, and many similar grievances; and asking you for advice and consolation—which you always seem very glad to give them. Now, sir, suppose you just step over to see me—I'm a woman, a wife, a mother. I shall tell you a different story. I shall speak of cigar smoke from the parlor to garret, of "gin slings" on every carpet, of ghosts of "gin slings" and "sherry cobblers" haunting the air of every room, of coming home drunk at two o'clock in the morning, of lounging in billiard rooms, liquor saloons and tragic alleys, of target excursions, of fast horses on the avenue, of——of a thousand such things. What do you say to all this? Where are your sympathies now? That's the sort of home and husband I have; and three thousands of women have the same kind.

You can publish one another in your newspaper; you make the laws, and publish the newspapers; you pat each other on the back, and make a fuss over each other's singing, fiddle-faddle "trials"—heaven save the mark—until you really imagine that your wives are monsters, and treat them accordingly.

A stop must be put to this sort of thing. You men must be waked up to your true condition, and be made to see what you have away. I could ask no worse punishment upon you; I seek no sweeter revenge.

NOW, MR. LANDER, will you stop this encouraging men to complain publicly of their wives? It's a crying shame. By and bye they will be giving the name right out in full. I guess you would not like to have a dozen or two respectable females pointing on you and setting your types some morning before breakfast! Well, then, you just look out, and take my hint. If you know which side your bread is buttered. For one, I've seen just about as much of that sort of stuff as I can bear, and I'm beginning to let my mind grow. I will tell the LANDER well, and I don't want to injure anybody, but I'm human, and there's no knowing what I might be driven to. Verily,

LUCINDA.

ROCK-A-BYE-BABYISM.

Louis Napoleon decreed that for all children born in France on the same day as the son and Eugenie's child, he would stand as godfather, the Empress as godmother. The average number of legitimate daily births in France being less than 2,500; of which the usual proportion is 1285 boys to 1216 girls. Of these imperial god-children, 1,285 were boys, and the named LOUIS-EUGENE and the girls EUGENIE-LOUISE.

Some of the bachelor diplomatists who have called on "the baby," have made characteristic and ludicrous mistakes. One gentleman coming on arriving near the little joker's audience chamber came upon a nurse who was carrying the child in her arms, which began crowing and clapping its hands, and crying "goo—goo." A circle was at once formed, and the bachelors and the married men reflections upon the extraordinary size, vigor, intelligence and agrobilities of the two-days-old infant. To their great astonishment, the nurse, the bachelor-lain, on coming up, informed them that they had been admiring the child of the head nurse, and that it was two months old.

The old nursery tune of "Rock-a-bye-baby" is the only one now allowed to be hummed or whistled in the streets of Paris.

ART.

The exhibition of paintings, at present open in this city, is attracting a great deal of public attention. Those who visit it will certainly be repaid for their trouble and expense by the gratification they will receive from such an examination of the beautiful pictures it contains. Love of the beautiful, a feeling common to all mankind, requires cultivation, and for strengthening this love and directing it in the right way, such exhibitions are one of the most importance and highest value. What a pity that only a few can enjoy them!

The best substitute we can offer for those who cannot visit the exhibition is a copy of the NEW YORK LEDGER; its clear, good type, the plain arrangement of its articles, its beautiful illustrations are expressly designed to appeal to the feelings and to cultivate the taste of its readers.

NEWSPAPERS.—We are glad to learn that newsdealers fully appreciate the services of the LEDGER in their behalf. Some of them acknowledge that the immense advertising of our paper, and the publication of the commencement of our continued stories in the daily papers, whereby hundreds of persons are led for the first time to visit their stores to purchase the LEDGER, have very materially increased the number of their general customers, because, when people get in the habit of visiting a news-room for the purpose of buying a particular paper, they will of course see other papers, and will gradually extend their custom to them, thereby increasing the newsman's business. In some cases, so great has been this increase, that the business of many news-rooms has nearly doubled, within the last few months.

It is our intention to make still greater efforts in this direction, and if our friends, the newsdealers, still vigorously second our exertions, they will, of course, vastly benefit themselves, as well as help us.